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LLOYD PENNANT, A TALE OF THE WEST.

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[THE RIGHT OF TRANSLATION IS RESERVED.]

CHAPTER III.

MIKE having disengaged himself from the cook, continued his progress. The passages and rooms were crowded by the neighbours, who came armed with pitchforks and other offensive implements to defend the premises against invasion, for the peasant who brought the warning had given notice of the danger as he passed along. The back-door was guarded by a ferocious looking fellow, with a hatchet in his hand, and before opening it, he held a colloquy with some one on the outside. The bars were then removed, and Mike reached the yard just in time to see an old hack, which he easily recognised, gallop past him to the stable. Having considerable experience in such matters, he at once perceived that there must be some mistake; hastening his pace, and directed by the uproar, he entered a small plantation adjoining the house, where he saw a sailor standing with his back to the wall, and manfully defending himself with a long wattle from a crowd of assailants. Mike's arrival was most opportune, for as he reached the outside of the crowd, a boy, who had climbed the wall, stood poising a large stone which he was about to hurl on the man beneath him. At his command hostilities were at once suspended. The sailor proved to be Pennant's servant, who, having a letter to deliver to his master, was furnished with a horse at Dunseverick, that he might the more speedily reach him.

The letter was from the Captain of the "Racer," directing Pennant's immediate return. A few moments sufficed for a hasty adieu, and the Lieutenant, springing upon the horse which had carried his servant from Dunseverick, rode rapidly towards Deerpark Bay. Captain Beaumont had that afternoon received despatches from Dublin, apprising him that a French frigate, which had sailed from Brest for the west coast of Ireland, might be momentarily expected there, and urging him to make every possible exertion to capture her, as she carried documents and emissaries,

which the government were most anxious to secure. After some time spent in consultation, the Lieutenant was about retiring, when the Captain remarked that his sudden recall might arouse suspicion in the neighbourhood, and suggested that he should again return to his friends as if nothing important had called him away, and rejoin the frigate privately during the night. His absence could be attended with no inconvenience, as the ship would not get under weigh until day-break, so that her course might be clearly seen by those who were, no doubt, watching their movements.

Pennant joyfully embraced the opportunity so unexpectedly afforded him of again seeing Kate Bingham, perhaps for the last time, and urged on his jaded horse with whip and spur. The evening was well advanced when he reached the Castle; neither Mike nor Harry had as yet returned, and Colonel Blake had gone to take his accustomed walk. He found Miss Bingham and Tim, the butler, in the Hall, both evidently in a state of great agitation. "Yes, Tim," said Kate, coming towards him, "I'll do it. Mr. Pennant, I have a request to make, which you *must* grant me without a moment's delay; put on your uniform, and follow me quickly to the drawing-room."

"Yes, yes, your honour," cried Tim, almost pushing him towards his bed-chamber—"yes, yes; young ladies is always impatient, and I know Miss Kate's in a hurry," (in a tone of great confidence, as he handed him his coat.) "The sheriff and bum bailiffs (bad luck to them) is coming, just only for a few minutes though—that'll do—now come along, yer honour." Tim threw the drawing-room door open, and Emily introduced Mr. Edwards, who was in naval undress, adding, "that she requested them to walk about the grounds until she sent for them to return." Pennant, who fancied the enactment of a scene similar to that which he had just witnessed at Captain Jack's, proceeded to the lawn as quickly as he could, followed by his new acquaintance, who carried a telescope in his hand. They had scarcely left the house when three well-mounted men rode up, and springing from their horses, entered the hall, while, at the same instant, others on foot advanced from the woods, and stationed themselves so as to command a view of the Castle on all sides. "Let us get away," said Pennant; "it may be indelicate to remain so near, for I fear something unpleasant is likely to happen."

"Pooh, pooh," replied the other; "people hereabout think nothing of such visits—we're used to them, and laugh heartily when they're over; in fact, those men are looking after me. We'll just stroll up and down here, to be at hand should Miss Bingham require us. Look," said he, adjusting the glass, "what a noble view this is." As one of the strangers approached, Edwards cautiously thrust his right hand into the breast of his coat, and Pennant could perceive that he grasped a dagger, without seeming to be aware of the man's presence, whom he adroitly managed to keep behind him; while still apparently occupied in looking through the glass, he carelessly remarked—"I suppose those fellows must be bailiffs, come to look for the Colonel or Master Mike. It's very extraordinary, but every one in this unfortunate country seems to be steeped in

debt." After a short inspection, the unwelcome visitor seemed satisfied, and retired to his former position, while the gentlemen continued to walk backwards and forwards upon the lawn, Edwards gradually, though as if unintentionally, increasing their distance from the house at every turn which they took. Some twenty minutes might have elapsed, when the persons who had entered the Castle returned to their horses, and on their appearance, Pennant's companion proceeded, without making any remark, to walk directly towards them.

"Officers of the frigate," said the subordinate, who had before so closely examined them, to the leader of the party, who was looking in their direction, as he mounted.

"Ah," muttered the other, clapping spurs to his horse, and galloping off, "he has the luck of the evil one, but I'll catch him yet."

The police officers (for such they were) had scarcely got out of view, when the gentlemen were summoned by Tim to enter. When about to open the drawing-room door, Pennant looked round for his companion, and was surprised to find himself alone. Kate was seated at the open window, waving her handkerchief, as if in reply to the greetings of some one without. "Oh!" she said, on perceiving him, "Mr. Pennant, from my heart I thank you for the service you have rendered to one who is very dear to me; I can never be sufficiently grateful. A further request I will ask you to grant me, and that is, that you never mention what has occurred to any person, and more especially to my brother." She looked up, expecting an answer, and perceived that Pennant's face had assumed an ashy paleness.

"You are ill, Mr. Pennant, you are ill."

"No, no, Miss Bingham, it will pass in a moment. I really am not conscious of having rendered any service to deserve your thanks. I promise all you ask; but your request has opened my eyes to my own folly. I had hoped—yes, Miss Bingham—I had fondly hoped to enjoy the blessing of your love, but now I perceive that another possesses the treasure which I thought might yet be mine; depend upon my devotion to your wishes, and now adieu!"

"Mr. Pennant," cried Kate, stay—pray stay; you misunderstand me, indeed you do. I did not mean—Mr. Edwards is only—his wife has always been the kindest of my friends. I cannot tell you now; hereafter you shall know all. Believe me—believe me, there is no one that I love, but—" she burst into tears, and would have left the room. It was too late; she heard the passionate declaration of his love, and plighted hers irrevocably in return. A sense of duty, as well as a desire to save Kate from the horrors of suspense, prevented Pennant communicating the particulars of his present position, or the risks he was about to encounter. Their interview was prolonged until the arrival of Mike and Harry, and then the lovers parted, the one happy that the *denouement* was over, her heart at ease, and her fate decided; the other inquieted by apprehensions for the future, and though elated with success, in some measure dissatisfied with his own conduct. Would it not have been better (he now

thought) to have awaited his return from the perilous service in which he was about to engage. Should he fall, his declaration would only add to the affliction of her he loved. Pennant had apprised Kate of the necessity for his immediate return to his ship, but he cautioned her to conceal his intended departure from Harry and Mike, as the former would at once conjecture that the frigate was about proceeding on some special duty, and the latter might inadvertently divulge a secret, which, for obvious reasons, it was necessary to preserve. Having previously despatched his servant with a letter, which, to prevent delay, he said should be delivered as quickly as possible to the Captain, Pennant retired, on pretence of fatigue, so that he might be at liberty to leave the Castle sufficiently early to visit the abbey, and afterwards to accomplish his journey on foot, and reach the "Racer" by the appointed time.

Colonel Blake, after wandering for some time through the grounds, proceeded, at a somewhat later hour than was his custom, towards the abbey. There he continued to walk, concealed from observation, between the walls of the ruins, and the trees which shaded it on the river side. He occasionally paused as if to listen, and as the night advanced, his impatience became manifest. "I shall remain no longer," he at length muttered; "some misfortune must have befallen him." At that moment Edwards emerged from the abbey. "A thousand apologies, my dear Blake, for having so long detained you, but I have been beset by dangers, which prevented me from keeping my appointment punctually. Having discovered that Sirr and his myrmidons were come from Dublin to arrest me, and that they were actually close to my place of concealment, I was reluctantly forced to take shelter at Dunseverick, where in a few minutes after my arrival, I learnt that they were hot foot in pursuit. All seemed lost, when dear Kate's presence of mind saved me; she dressed me in her brother's uniform, I walked about with Lieutenant Pennant, who, of course, did not know me, absolutely under the fellows' noses, until they had ransacked every room in your house. When they left it was too early to venture here, and on quitting the demesne by the mountain side, I nearly fell into the hands of some cavalry, who, no doubt, were destined to give me an escort, and was obliged to remain concealed in the wood until they had left. How I enjoy such hair-breadth escapes! nevertheless," he added, in a sorrowful tone, "this attempt alarms and disheartens me, for it clearly proves that the Government have at length found a traitor amongst the very few who are entirely in my confidence; one thing is evident, that I must at once leave the neighbourhood; a few days more will, however, I trust, put an end to my suspense, and at least secure me from the ignominy of a felon's death."

"The delay only caused anxiety for your safety," replied the Colonel, "for I know but too well the incaution with which you unnecessarily expose yourself."

"We are at least safe for the moment here, I suppose," said Edwards; "there is no one in the abbey, and I have stationed Darcy so that he can command a view of the road and foot-bridge."

"We should have been safe from interruption even without the precautions you have taken, for few would venture to visit the abbey after night. But tell me at once your object in seeking this interview; oh, what a contrast between this and our last moonlight meeting on the banks of the Garrone; *then* you were a thoughtless, happy youth, *now*—"

"Now," interposed Edwards, "I am a reflecting man, burning to avenge the wrongs of my country, and determined to attempt the achievement of her liberty. It is needless, my friend, to look back on what has passed, but be assured, that I still preserve the same joyous spirit which you then so often envied me, and which has enabled me to bear up against the crosses and disappointments inseparable from the position in which I am placed, and the cause to which I am devoted; and now, that every thing is prepared for the outbreak, I come to ask you, for the last time, if you will give old Ireland the benefit of your experience, and draw the sword, which won you glory in the service of a despot, to assist her independence. I come to know if you will take your place amongst those patriots, whose success will enrol their names in the brightest records of fame, or whose failure will be lamented by every heart that throbs for freedom!"

"I am unequal to such an exertion," replied the Colonel; "my spirit has been subdued, my thirst for glory has been long since extinguished by my domestic misfortune. I am now but a weak man, whose quailing counsels would only paralyze your efforts in the hour of danger, and whose smitten arm would be powerless in the struggle which you seek; besides, I cannot adopt your political views, neither do I consider you justified in plunging the nation into the horrors of a civil war, now, when the British Government have greatly relaxed the penal code, and seem disposed to repeal it altogether."

"Pshaw!" interrupted his companion, "do you put faith in their promises, or believe in the honesty of their intentions? They have slightly relaxed their religious persecution, because they dare no longer maintain so hideous an oppression in full force before the world. They hold out the bait of Emancipation to the Catholics, because, through their assistance, they hope to destroy our nationality; but their object once attained, think you they will redeem their pledges, or grant those concessions which their dishonest policy compelled them to promise? Their conduct since '82 should show you what may be expected if the British Ministry succeed in cajoling the Catholics, and buying the Irish Parliament. They will scoff you to scorn when demanding the price for which you betrayed your country, and should they be hereafter coerced into granting *you* liberty of conscience, and our common country liberty of trade, the one will be clogged with insulting conditions to counteract its practical enjoyment, and the other, with well-devised restrictions, to cramp the development of our national resources."

"But I cannot be convinced that your means are equal to the attainment of your object; you have neither organization nor discipline, artillery nor ammunition."

"Cold steel and stout hearts will supply those deficiencies."

"I feel the degradation of my country, but—"

"But you will not dare to strike a blow in her defence; shame upon the man so circumstanced as you are who fears to act! Pardon me," he quickly added, seizing the Colonel's hand, "pardon my warmth of feeling; but when I reflect that I have a wife to cheer my hearth, and children to inherit my name—that I have rank, and fortune, and position, and prospects, it maddens me to think that the slaves, in whose behalf I risk the loss of such blessings, should shrink from fighting in their own most holy cause. Entering life with all life's advantages, I have, while still young, sacrificed high military rank, and a glorious career, in support of my political convictions—while you, and such as you, hesitate to devote the clouded remnant of an oppressed existence to the sacred duty of obtaining liberty for your altars, and freedom for yourselves."

"It is useless, I see, to argue; I would still pray you, for your family's sake, to reflect upon your position before it is yet too late; here your safety is compromised, but it is still possible to escape to France, where you can enjoy your domestic happiness until better times arrive, and the influence of your connections can secure your pardon."

"Pardon for what?" fiercely interrupted his companion—"pardon for having stood up for right against wrong, for liberty against oppression, for my country against the stranger! Those are not the times, methinks, for truckling to tyranny, when the glorious spirit of freedom is pervading the minds of men, and her sons are smiting her enemies on the plains of Germany. I seek no compromise; I desire no recreant safety. Heart and soul I have embarked in a holy cause, and whether success or defeat attend me, in that cause will I live or perish. Three hundred thousand Irishmen are sworn in and ready; hourly, I expect, to welcome the gallant Hoche, the head of an invading army, and with such resources it would be blasphemy against God's justice to anticipate defeat."

"My lord——"

"Tush, my dear Blake, I have abandoned the use of all such aristocratic distinctions; call me Edward, as you used to do of old in happier times—" Here he was interrupted by Darey, who said, hastily, "The wicket-gate has opened."

"Adieu!—perhaps a last adieu"—as he grasped the Colonel's hand; "should I fall—for I shall never be taken—promise me to befriend my wife and little ones; they would then be, as a matter of course, cast off by my great and loyal relatives, and my country may not be in a position to protect them."

"In that depend upon me, and should failure befall, and misfortune overtake yourself, remember that, no matter what the consequences may be, my home shall be always open to receive and shelter you. Adieu—may God protect you!"

The harvest moon was shining brightly, as the sailor servant left the Castle, and set out to join his ship. He had partaken rather freely of the good fare at Captain Jack's, and proceeded on his way at a rapid pace,

until he entered the walk, which led through the pine grove to the wicket-gate. The darkness, by which he was then surrounded, appeared to affect him, for he walked more slowly, and as he advanced, looked frequently and anxiously around and behind him. When he reached the gate, and placed his hand upon the latch, his whole frame seemed agitated, he paused for a moment, as if in doubt, then opening the door, he rushed into the public road, and remained fixed there, as if spell-bound. After a few minutes, and while evidently labouring under strong excitement, he moved quickly towards the ruin. Turning to enter, he suddenly jostled against Colonel Blake, and uttering a scream of terror, fell senseless to the ground.

The Colonel at once recognised the sailor, and easily conjecturing the cause of his alarm, remained patiently beside him, until consciousness returned. When the man's opening eyes rested upon him, he exclaimed wildly, "Spare me, spare me, for Heaven's mercy, and I'll do justice to you and yours!"

"Cheer up, my stout fellow!" said the Colonel, "you are frightened without cause. I'm no ghost, surely you know me?"

"Thank God, thank God," cried the sailor, as he crouched closer, and looked wildly around him. "Thank God! you are not Squire Ulick."

"Squire Ulick," repeated the Colonel, in astonishment. "What do you know about him?"

"What do I know. I see him now, as plainly as I saw him the day he left the jail to be hanged. I know what will make the hair stand on your head, and I'll tell it, too. Lieutenant Pennant is his son. Yes—before heaven it's true—to-morrow I'll discover all, and prove it; but not here—not now, I must be off to the ship, or I'll get flogged, and before the Colonel could interpose to detain him, he had passed the foot-bridge, and was lost to sight."

Astounded, by so unexpected a revelation, Colonel Blake remained for some time rooted to the spot, and then, while deliberating on what course he should adopt, continued his walk amongst the yew trees on the river's edge. It was twelve, when Pennant, who had anxiously awaited the appointed time, emerged from the wicket-gate, and proceeded towards the abbey. On entering the large arched doorway, he found himself upon a narrow path, leading to the tomb of the Blakes, through the dank grass and briers, which overgrew the interior of the ruin. A mullioned window in the opposite gable, standing on the outside level with the ground, admitted a ray of light, which struck upon the floor, about mid-length, and served to render the surrounding darkness still more dismal. It was an hour, and a scene, well calculated to influence a vivid imagination, already excited by the apparition at the Castle, and the anticipated discovery of some important secret. The young man remained silent and stationary, until the loneliness of the place, and the excitement under which he laboured, became intolerable. Unable any longer to restrain himself, he exclaimed, "I am here," and after a few seconds' pause, he continued, in a calmer tone, "Speak what you have to say, for I have but spare time to tarry, and may never again have an opportunity to hear."

The silence remained unbroken, and then the thought flashed across his mind, that the appointment was but a trick of Bingham's. His self-possession instantly returned, and now smiling at his own credulity, he was about to quit the abbey, when the same apparition, which had so startled him at Dunseverick, stood on the outside of the mullioned window, he paused in anticipation of the promised communication, but the figure before him neither moved or spoke. Summoning all his resolution, Pennant advanced into the strip of moonlight, when he became plainly visible—and then said:—

“I am prepared to hear what you may have to reveal to me.”

The figure moved and spoke, and the delusion vanished as Colonel Blake replied, “It seems providentially arranged, sir, that we should meet now, and here, too, in the most fitting place, for an explanation. Either you are ignorant of your parentage, as you have professed to be, or you are guilty of a grievous crime, in seeking to connect yourself with my family, perhaps, for the base purpose of afterwards wrecking your vengeance on an innocent victim. In either case, my course must be the same. The gibbet stands as an insuperable barrier to any connection between the son of Ulick Martin, an executed murderer, and the niece of Maurice Blake, and here, where your father committed and atoned for his crime, I bid you fly my presence, or be prepared, should we ever meet again, for a public exposure of your family disgrace.” The Colonel at once departed without waiting for a reply. Pennant remained stupified, and overwhelmed by the terrible announcement. He could not now doubt that his mysterious visitor of the preceding night was Colonel Blake, and that the Abbey was selected for their interview, for the double purpose of avoiding a painful scene at home, and of cutting off, by a solemn denunciation, all hope of future intercourse. He had often heard the story of the murder, and subsequent execution detailed by Bingham, and still more recently by Mike, and had warmly joined in execrating the heartless villany of the assassin. “Was he, then, the son of him, whose crime he held in such detestation—whose memory he had cursed? How could he appear again amongst his brethren in arms, men of unblemished honour, and untarnished descent—could he, despised and degraded as he soon must be, venture to seek their future fellowship, and hazard the risk of the threatened discovery in their presence, the dreadful secret must soon be known by his dearest friend, must be soon disclosed to that innocent and pure-minded girl, whose affections he had but just engaged, and on whose love his future happiness depended.” All those reflections passed rapidly through his mind. His first impulse, was at once to fly the country, and bury himself in some foreign land, where none should know of his existence; but on further reflection, he bethought that the position in which he was placed, while it forbade the desertion of his duty, might yet afford him an opportunity of quitting life with honour, and of leaving a reputation, calculated to counterbalance in some degree, his inherited ignominy. He mechanically bent his steps towards the ship, determined not to survive the anticipated action. As he proceeded, his mind became gradually more collected, his resolution, more fixed at times,

the consoling thought would arise, that perhaps 'twas but some hallucination of Colonel Blake's distempered mind, and his heart cheered at the thought that, after all, he might not be the child of such a parent; but then again, when he remembered, that his mother had always preserved a studied silence upon the subject of his father, that she refused to let him have his portrait, and carefully avoided all reference to his mode of life, all particulars regarding his death, the most harassing doubts succeeded the transient gleams of comfort, and left him plunged still deeper in despair. In the event of his ship's not meeting the enemy, he resolved to seek his mother as speedily as possible, and demand from her a full and explicit account of his father's history. As he neared the shore day commenced to dawn, and, in the still calm of the early morning, he could distinctly hear the clanking of the capstan, as they heaved the anchor. On gaining the hill's crest, which sheltered the harbour, he saw the frigate, with all sail set, majestically moving from her moorings. The sight revived him. He hurried to the beach, jumped into a boat which lay in waiting, and soon stood upon the quarter-deck, which he had so often paced while proudly anticipating a glorious and successful career.

Fortunately for Pennant, such of the officers as were on duty had too much occupation to mark his altered appearance, or question him as to its cause, while the bustle and excitement of the moment tended to distract his own attention, and withdraw his thoughts from the awful discovery which weighed so crushingly upon his mind.

Captain Beaumont determined to sail northwards, in the expectation that his absence becoming known to the disaffected on shore would soon be communicated to the Frenchman, when he approached the coast, and might induce him to enter Deerhaven Bay, and by returning about midnight, before the arms and necessaries which the French ship was supposed to carry could probably be landed, he hoped to surprise and capture her there. The "Racer" proceeded under easy sail, and soon lost sight of her late anchorage. The day passed without encountering an enemy, and when evening came she was put about, and retraced her course, under more canvas and with a brisker breeze. The coast for some leagues on either side of Deerhaven Bay was formed of steep cliffs, rising directly from the sea to the height of some hundred feet. There was deep water to their very base, and from the deck of a first-rate you might chuck a biscuit on the shore. The entrance to the bay itself, was not more than a quarter of a mile in breadth, a sort of chasm or rent, in the surrounding mountains.

Availing himself of the peculiarities of the coast, Captain Beaumont kept the frigate within shade of the headlands. Thus, while she remained unseen, the enemy would be plainly visible in the moonlight, did he venture to appear. It was midnight, and Lloyd Pennant paced the deck pondering on his situation, and deciding upon the steps he should take. The "Racer" was now close upon her station. There seemed but small chance of an engagement, and he had no prospect before him but the maddening one of being forced to land in a place where his disgrace might, ere this, but too probably be a matter of public notoriety, when suddenly a beacon

light flamed on the crest of a lofty headland, to the southward. The men were at once sent noiselessly to quarters, and everything prepared for action. Some minutes of deep suspense elapsed, a profound silence reigned on board, and Captain Beaumont was in the act of expressing his suspicion, that the Frenchman had already entered the harbour, when another light from the mountain, under whose shade they were sailing, cast its glare upon the water beyond. The vessel instantly hove to, and quietly awaited the result. There was half an hour of intense excitement, but still no enemy. The Captain of the "Racer," acting upon the opinion he had already formed as to the enemy's position, announced his determination to proceed at all hazards, although the First Lieutenant suggested the improbability of a second signal being made were the Frenchman already safe within his port. They had now neared the termination of the headland, when, just as the British frigate opened the bay, a sail appeared, standing towards her from the opposite side. The moment the "Racer" was perceived, the stranger, now within gun-shot, at once bore up, while the frigate crowded all sail in chase, and opened fire from her bow guns, a shot from which disabled the French ship's rudder, when she flew round to the wind, for the moment unmanageable. During the confusion, the "Racer" ranged up, delivered her broadside, and boarded. The action was short, but decisive. Pennant jumped first upon the enemy's deck, and the ship was carried, after a desperate, but unavailing resistance.

The Admiral's station lay some leagues to the northward, and thither Captain Beaumont at once proceeded with his prize.

By noon next day Pennant was travelling towards Dublin as fast as Irish post-horses could take him, charged with despatches, containing an account of the action, in which his own conduct received particular notice, and carrying documents of great political importance, found upon the captured prisoners. The enemy having been so completely surprised, the "Racer" had suffered but slightly in the conflict, and, as it appeared from papers discovered in the French vessel, that her consort followed closely in her wake, the Admiral decided that by nightfall Captain Beaumont should sail again, and return to his post, in the hope of capturing her also.

The "Racer" was proceeding on her course, a slight land-breeze filled her sails, and all hands of the watch, not actually engaged on duty, fatigued by their late exertions, were stowed away in convenient places round the deck, and sound asleep. Two men who sat in the lee hammock nettings, close by the fore rigging, were the only persons awake in that part of the ship.

"Well, Jim," said one, a tall, ill-favoured sailor, "you had a narrow escape last night, if 'twasn't for the First Lieutenant's handiness, 'twould have gone hard with you, chummy."

"Aye, that's true, Dick, I owe him my life, and more, I'll pay him too, that I'm determined on."

"Well, in that I think you're right, tight-hand as he is, and often as he has stopped my grog, and tickled my back, too, I can't help saying, he

deserves a good turn at your hands, hadn't it been for him, the Frenchman's outlass would have spoilt your brain-box."

"Aye, aye, Dick, I know it; and you owe him something, too, and I hope God may soften your heart to pay him."

"I?" retorted Dick, with a hoarse laugh; "I owe him something—aye, that I do; and maybe I wouldn't pay him, too, if I could, that's all."

The other man raised himself from the reclining posture in which he lay, and placing his hand upon his companion's shoulder, while looking fixedly in his face, he said in a low and husky voice—"Dick, the Fust Luftenant is Squire Ulick's son."

The tall man gazed at him for some minutes in silence, his face was deadly pale as he slowly repeated, "Squire Ulick's son." "Stuff," he exclaimed, when he seemed to have mastered his feelings; "how do you know that, are you beginning your old nonsense again? I tell you, Jim, I'll not stand it; let's have no more of it."

"Dick," replied the other, calmly, "I'll tell you how I found it out—you may recollect some years ago, when we touched at Carnarvon, Mr. Pennant took me with him to carry his portmantel, when he got shore-leave to see his mother; well, when we reached the house, who should I find his mother to be but Lady Marguerite; so help me, Heaven, Dick, it's true. I knowed her the moment I set eyes upon her; it was the same sweet face as used to help my poor bedridden mother; and when I went in to Mr. Pennant's room as he went to bed, what should I see upon the table but Squire Ulick's picture, as like as life. 'Jim,' says the youngster, 'houldin' it up to me to look at, 'that's my father; wasn't he a handsome man?'"

"'Yes, sir, he was,' I says; but at that moment all came afore my eyes, and I got weak like, the poor boy ran for a glass of wine, and I took it from his hands. Dick, I never felt so queer; had you been there yourself you'd have felt it too."

"You were always a chicken-hearted fellow, Jim, and so you'll be 'till you die. Now, what's the use of all this nonsense? so let there be an end on't; why didn't you tell me this when you found it out?"

"Becase I was afeerd; but from that hour I determined never to lose sight of the boy agin, an' I managed to make you enter the ships he sailed in without your knowing why I did so; but I can't stand this tormint no longer, he has saved my life, and I'll tell all, hap what may; so to Colonel Blake I'll go the moment we anchor, and make a clean breast of it."

"You wouldn't do that."

"I will—I'll not be bullied any longer."

"Come, come," said Dick, after a short pause, in a scolding voice, and slapping his companion on the back, "let this pass away; its only one your fits of blue devils—you'll get well with the day-light."

"Dick, there's no use in talkin', it's as good as done already, for I told the Colonel a summat the night before we sailed."

"What did you tell him?"

"Only that the Luftenant was the Squire's son."

"Not more?"

"No, I hadn't time; I tried to tell the Lieutenant himself, but failed; I went to him, ghost-like, in the Colonel's hat and cloak, he pursued me as I left, and I had barely time to save myself."

"Well, then, you can easily get off; say you were drunk and didn't know what you were doing."

"Dick, neither threatening nor coaxing will serve; as sure as that blessed moon is shining over our heads and God's eye looking down upon us, I'll tell all—all, come what may of it."

There was a pause in the conversation, during which the tall man seemed absorbed in thought, then, after looking cautiously around him, he exclaimed in an under voice, "what's that in the water?" as his companion mechanically leant over the vessel's side to look, he plunged a knife into his back, and heaved him into the sea.

The wounded man uttered a faint scream as he fell, a splash followed, and the cry of "a man over-board," from the sentry on the lee gangway, aroused all on deck from their slumbers. The helm was quickly put down, the ship flew up in the wind, the lee-quarter boat was lowered, and after a few minutes the unfortunate sailor was picked up and laid upon the deck, apparently lifeless. The surgeon at once pronounced the case as hopeless, the weapon had penetrated so deeply that recovery could not be expected; but the man still lived, and it was possible that he might yet become conscious, and have strength enough left to denounce his murderer. Every one denied all knowledge of the deed, and none were astir in that part of the vessel at the time of the occurrence but the assassin and his victim. The knife which he had withdrawn from the wound was laid on the table beside him by the surgeon, but could not now be found. Restoratives were administered, and, after a considerable interval, the wounded man revived.

"Are we near Deerhaven?" he inquired, in a weak voice, of the surgeon.

"Yes, my man."

"Then, send at once for Colonel Blake, I have something to tell him, and I feel that I can't live long."

The surgeon assured him that his fears were but too well founded.

"Mind, sir, if you find me goin' afore he comes, warn me, that I may say what I have to say to the Captain; but I'd rather wait for the Colonel, if I could, for he knows the ins and outs of it, and I'd have less to say to him, it pains me greatly to speak; only send word by the messenger that the sailor he met at the Abbey wants to see him before he dies—that will hurry him."

When asked who wounded him, he only shook his head, and replied—"I'll tell all together."

Colonel Blake passed a sleepless night after his distressing interview with Pennant. The varied events of his life crowded upon his recollection—his early glory—his first love—his bereavement—his wandering—his ultimate desire to dwell in peace under the old roof—his comparative happiness in his new society and affections—and then his heart sunk

within him, and he groaned aloud as he reflected that the sad event which had already caused him such bitter suffering was likely to be once again brought before the world, coupled with, perhaps, the alienation, if not the disgrace, of the dear girl, who was now his chief consolation, he arose undecided how to act; one thing only he had determine upon, namely, to send at once for the sailor, and learn from him all the particulars of his story, and the proofs which he could adduce in its support. Daylight had scarcely dawned when he despatched a note to Captain Beaumont, requesting permission for Pennant's servant to come to Dunseverick. In due time his messenger came back, the ship had sailed; the note was again forwarded towards evening. The frigate had not as yet returned—a second night of misery had quite prostrated the Colonel's strength of mind and body, and when, after sending a third time, he received no tidings of the "Racer," he determined to tell all that had occurred to Mike, and seek comfort in his consolation and advice: when the latter entered the library, the altered appearance of his relative shocked and alarmed him.

"Maurice, what has happened? you are ill."

"Ill in mind, and sorely in want of counsel and support," said the Colonel, extending his hand.

"Maurice," interrupted Mike, "I am sorry to see you so depressed, but it's your habit to magnify matters; to an unquiet mind trifles appear as insupportable burdens."

"Mike," resumed the Colonel, "I have heard appalling news; Lieutenant Pennant is Ulick Martin's son."

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Mike, "can this be true? How strange that Mrs. O'Mahony remarked the likeness."

"It struck me, too," said the Colonel, "so much so, indeed, that at first his presence was painful to me."

"But what authority is there for such an assertion?" demanded Mike.

The Colonel recounted the scene at the Abbey, and after telling how the ship had sailed before he could obtain another interview with the sailor, asked advice as to how he should proceed. After considerable discussion, it was finally arranged, that should the sailor's story be supported by any feasible proofs of its truth, Kate must be kept in ignorance of the real facts, while Pennant should be forbidden the house, and all communication between them cease. "If," added Mike, "I find that he is aware of his birth, and sought to wipe out his family taint by a connection with us, I'll make an example of him."

At this moment a midshipman on horseback passed the windows at full gallop, and was almost immediately shown in, to deliver a note from Captain Beaumont. After casting his eyes over its contents, the Colonel handed the letter to Mike, saying, as he left the room, "I shall start with you immediately, sir; and, Mike, you, too, will be required."

In the Colonel's absence the youngster briefly related the particulars of their recent success; and, in reply to Mike's inquiry, if Pennant survived, and was still aboard the vessel, informed him "that the First Lieutenant

had proceeded to Dublin with despatches, and would, no doubt, be in a few days made Commander." "Is he alive?" "Aye, that he is, although how he is so is almost a miracle; his clothes were riddled with bullets, and his hat and epaulette sliced by cutlasses; he was the first man to board, and you should have seen him on the enemy's quarter-deck; didn't he play 'hell and tommy' with the mounseers, he killed the Captain, and at least, half-a-dozen other fellows, with his own hand. Here's success and long long life to Lloyd Pennant," (as he tossed off a bumper of sherry from the refreshment tray placed before him,) "he's an honour to our profession."

The preparations were hastily made, and the party rode as quickly as their horses could carry them towards Deerhaven Bay. Captain Beaumont received them at the gangway. "A shocking event has occurred here, Colonel Blake; one of my crew was last night stabbed and thrown overboard by another, the poor fellow was fortunately picked up, and is still living; the surgeon says he cannot survive much longer, but he refuses to make any disclosure until he sees you. This way—this way—there's not a moment to be lost; he's just been carried on deck, as he could no longer endure the heat below."

On a cott spread upon the quarter-deck lay Lloyd Pennant's servant, his head supported on bolsters, piled so as to keep him in a reclining position, while the surgeon knelt by his side, and continually applied his fingers to ascertain the fluctuations of the dying man's pulse. Poor Jim's eyes were closed, his breast heaved convulsively, his breathing was difficult and spasmodic, while the pallor of death overspread his countenance, and its clammy dew stood in beads around his colourless lips. The approach of the strangers aroused him. "Is he come?" he muttered, and then his languid eyes rested on Colonel Blake. "Thank God," he said, faintly, "thank God, I lived to see you! Ah, Colonel, you remind me of old times when I was young and innocent, when you and Squire Ulick used to hunt together; ah, them was happy days, but I'm scarcely able to talk," he closed his eyes, pronounced some incoherent words and was silent. The surgeon administered some brandy, "He has but a short time left," (he observed,) "to tell anything, still, 'tis best to let him rest."

Again the filmy eyes were opened, the sufferer's strength seemed partially renewed, he made an effort and sat almost upright—"Leave us alone."

The surgeon and those about retired a few paces. "Stoop down and put your ear close to me, for I can't speak loud; you remember what I told you the other night, Colonel, the Lieutenant is Squire Ulick's son; it's all written in a paper that you'll find in the pocket of my coat below, directed to himself, and witnessed by the surgeon. I told him 'twas my will, I brought it with me to Dunseverick, intending to give it—get him his own," he cried, after a few moments' pause, while convulsively grasping the Colonel's hand—"promise me that before I die, and I'll bless you—his father suffered," the last word of the sentence was only heard by the Colonel. Another fit of insensibility supervened, the surgeon poured more brandy down his throat.

"This," he said, "will most probably be the last agony."

After a short interval the stimulant produced its effect. Jim again revived. "Bring Dick, my chummy, here." Dick, who was close at hand, was immediately confronted with his dying messmate, who gazed on him for a moment in silence, and then, as if having roused all his remaining energy for the exertion, he spoke, his speech becoming, as he proceeded, more faint, and broken by increasing weakness—

"Dick, I am now going to die—acknowledge all to the Colonel—and— and help to save me from damnation. If you do—I'll never—I'll forgive—"

"Clap irons on the villain," shouted Captain Beaumont, "he's the murderer."

"Why should I be accused so?" retorted Dick, while being handcuffed, "he hasn't said I did it, and if he had, 'twouldn't avail, he's raving."

"No," resumed Jim, "I have my senses, and if you tell that *only* to the Colonel. Oh, do—do," he said, suddenly raising himself, and attempting to throw his arms round Dick's knees.

"Damn you for a fool," roared the latter, as he fetched him a kick upon the chest, with all his force. The dying man sprang to his feet, and shrieked out, as he pointed towards his assailant, "Twas he who"—he gasped for breath—there was a gurgle in his throat—his mouth twitched—his eyes closed—he fell heavily forward—and was dead. Dick was with difficulty restrained from jumping on his victim. In the scuffle which ensued, as they dragged him away, his jacket was pulled over his head, a slight stain of blood was clearly visible on the back of his pantaloons, and a knife fell from his pocket.

"Secure and examine that knife," cried Captain Beaumont. At the hilt was a clotted mark, and a small triangular piece had been newly broken from the blade.

An immediate search was made amongst the dead sailor's clothes for the document which he mentioned, but nothing of the sort could be discovered.

Colonel Blake and Master Mike were seated in the library when the clock struck midnight, and it was evident that the subject of their conversation had been a painful one. "At all events," concluded the former, "it is my duty to communicate the information I have received; it will be for him to see if anything can be made of such a vague declaration, unsupported by any proof. Who this man was, or how he became acquainted with such secrets, it is now impossible to know, as the sailor committed for his murder denies all knowledge of his history or country, and professes himself ignorant of everything connected with Lieutenant Pennant, or his affairs. Could it be, my conscience often whispers me, that, in the sad and by-gone tragedy, I played the part of a heated partizan, rather than that of an impartial magistrate; that I allowed my passion to control my actions, and that my personal hatred urged me into a too rigorous discharge of my official duties. The indulgence of such feelings is sure to entail its own punishment, when time brings reflection, even though the cause in which we were engaged may have been a just one, and the end attained legiti-

mate ; but other matters are to be thought of now. Harry must follow the young man, wherever he may have gone, and deliver this letter."

The United Irishmen, now fully organised, only awaited the arrival of their French allies, to break out into open rebellion, and the ill-fated Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the heart and soul of the conspiracy, for whose apprehension a large reward was offered, lay concealed in the neighbourhood ; although for two years past it was a matter of public notoriety that an armed political association, founded for the purpose of overthrowing the British Government, was in existence, although its members were drilled and practised to military manœuvres, almost openly, and their leaders were perfectly well known, still the executive were unable to obtain proofs of their guilt sufficient to justify their arrest, and bring them to trial with any hope of obtaining a conviction. At length one man, of the hundreds of thousands entrusted with the secret, was found base enough to betray his associates. The information given by Reynolds led to the attempted arrest of Lord Edward, at Oliver Bond's, who, having escaped the trap laid for him, sought refuge in the west until the time had arrived for raising the standard of revolt. All the Catholics, and many of the Protestants of that part of the country, were either implicated in the plot, or aware of its existence, and anxious for its success, and amongst the most active and useful of its agents was Mrs. O'Mahony, the wife of Captain Jack.

Castle Shane, an irregularly built cottage, attached to the massive square tower of the ancient stronghold of the family, was peculiarly well placed for the purpose of carrying on clandestine correspondences, or enabling those under the ban of the law, to escape its vengeance. It stood close upon the shore of a lake of considerable length, interspersed with well-wooded islands, and bounded on the opposite side by an extensive range of wild, and nearly uninhabited mountains. "The mistress," being sole proprietor of all the surrounding land, allowed no boats but her own, or her trusty dependants, to ply upon its waters, and Captain Jack often owed his safety to the skill which the peasantry displayed in taking advantage of the shelter of its islands, to baffle or retard the advance of his pursuers. No boat was allowed to remain within the precincts of the demesne but their own, and it was always moored close by the back-door, while two "gossoms," retained for that special purpose, and always in attendance, were ready at a moment's notice to receive their passengers, and pull to a place of safety. When the police or military made a foray at either end of the lake, they were obliged to carry their own boats with them, and their approach was always discovered long before they could reach their destination—an attack from the opposite side, was impossible, the inhabitants lived by illicit distillation, and had their "currags" always effectually concealed, and scouts on the hills to warn them of the approach of strangers.

It was about five o'clock in the evening, and Mrs. O'Mahony, Captain Jack, and Mike, were on the lawn, attentively watching a "curragh" or "canoe," which, having crossed the lake, was now nearing the shore ; a youth pulled both paddles, and a country girl sat in the stern. The "mistress," on receiving a signal, burst into a fit of laughter, and had just sent the gentle-

men in to order dinner, when her attention was attracted by a noise and confusion on the other side of the house, and before she had time to raise an alarm, Captain Lammy, of the Tubbercurry Yeomanry, followed by four dismounted troopers, was beside her; at the same moment, the girl from the boat approached, carrying a basket of fowl upon her arm. At first view of the soldiers she seemed abashed, but quickly recovering from her surprise, she walked boldly up, and "dropping a curtsy," asked if her ladyship wanted any chickens.

"What would I want with chickens," exclaimed Mrs. O'Mahony, "and the yeomen come maybe to burn my house, as if I was a rebel. I want no chickens, be off," but after making some remark to Lammy, to engage his attention, she added, "my girl, I may want them, and if you'll just sit down there on the grass, and wait till I'm done with these gentlemen, if they don't bring me to jail, I'll buy them."

"Now, sirs," to the yeomen, "come in, no apologies, Captain, do your duty, I wish the search to be as strict as possible. I hope you have the back-door guarded, and the boat secured, so that no one can get away."

"You needn't be uneasy about that, ma'am," said Captain Lammy, "the house is surrounded, and neither the Pope himself, nor all the devils in hell can escape me, if they be within. If the rebelly rascal, Lord Edward, be here, I'll have him as sure as you're standing there, and every man-Jack of you'll eat your supper in the jail. Sergeant Woods, you go to that wicket-gate, keep a sharp look out, and let no one pass."

The sergeant went to his post, and as the rest of the party entered the house, the country girl seated herself upon the grass some paces off, and having modestly adjusted her petticoats, so as to cover her feet, occupied herself in arranging her chickens, who seemed riotous and discontented with their confinement.

Arrived in the hall, Mrs. O'Mahony shut the door after her.

"Now, sir, place a sentry there, who can watch the stairs. There are two gentlemen in the parlour, you know them both, Master Mike Blake and my husband."

"Exactly the party," (whispered one of the men to the Captain,) "we have him at last."

"Here, Jack, my dear," (cried his better half, flinging the parlour-door open,) "here's Captain Lammy come to search the house, and arrest us all as rebels—a pretty pass things are come to, when you, that send more soldiers into the king's army than any other man in Ireland, are suspected of trying to overturn the Government and destroying your own bread and butter."

Both gentlemen received the announcement with a loud laugh, while Lammy was explaining the object of his visit, and the men who accompanied him, was searching a closet, into which he at once rushed, Mrs. O'Mahony whipt a knife and fork from the table, and concealed them in her pocket. When the yeoman returned to the room, he looked attentively at the preparations made for dinner, and seemed disappointed.

"Now, gentlemen," said "the mistress," "pray continue your search

without delay, Lord Edward may escape while you're talking; besides it is just our dinner hour, and if we are to dine at home, I don't wish to have the dinner spoilt."

The search continued. Every room was entered, and every bed and possible place of concealment ransacked, without discovering the traitor. Mrs. O'Mahony all the while keeping the Captain, and the man who accompanied him, continually occupied by her caustic remarks upon their proceedings. When they arrived in the kitchen she said, "now, Captain Lammy, I suppose you are satisfied?"

"Perfectly, ma'am, 'perfectly,' and on my soul, ma'am, I'm devilish glad that I didn't find him here, on your account."

"Well, now, my good fellows," to the yeomen, "you'll be good enough to walk out on the back-door, and, Captain, we shall be happy if you remain for dinner."

"Go, my boys, go," said Lammy. "Hawkins, you'll have a report drawn up." "And," interrupted the mistress, "you'll remain."

"Well, thank you, ma'am, you see I would willingly, but if I dined in Papish society, one doesn't know what they might say—damn it, and Mr. Blake too—you see—you know."

"Nonsense, nonsense, I'll take no excuse; besides, it's your duty to stay and watch, Lord Edward might come yet. There now, off with your sword and belts, and come along. Send up dinner, cook, really I'm half famished."

"Well, if I must, I must," said Lammy. "Hawkins, you'll return for me at ten, and bring the troop with you; one can't be two cautious in these times, ma'am."

The gentlemen who remained in the parlour seemed somewhat astonished at the addition to their party, but supposing that Lammy had forced his company upon them, or that he was invited for some good purpose, they quietly submitted to the arrangement. As they were sitting to table, Mrs. O'Mahony exclaimed, "well, that is a persevering girl, to remain all this time, and such a disturbance going on," then raising the window, she cried out, "Go round to the kitchen with your fowl, and the cook will buy them."

Captain Lammy was a good specimen of the uneducated and coarsely-mannered "Squireens," to whom the Government then were obliged to entrust the command of that most useless, but yet mischievous force, the Irish Yeomanry—exclusively composed of the descendants of Cromwell's Puritans and William's Dutch mercenaries, forming a sort of garrison amongst an hostile population, and the possession of the confiscated property which they enjoyed, depending wholly on the stability of British rule, these men were loyal from necessity, but the barbarities which they practised on an unarmed population aggravated the general discontent, while their well-known cowardice, in every military affair in which they were engaged, clearly demonstrated their utter worthlessness as soldiers. The lower class of Irish Protestants were then insolent and lazy. The "Debentures" enabled them to live in idleness, and their loyalty conferred the privilege of insulting and maltreating the Catholic population with impunity. Some, more industrious than the rest, amassed wealth, and bought the properties of their

less provident co-religionists. The accumulation of those petty debentures conferred increased influence, and their possessors soon attained the objects of their ambition—the Commission of the Peace—and the command of a Yeomanry corps—they became esquires in right of the one, and were dignified by the military rank appertaining to the other.

Captain Lammy was at bottom a humane man, but his prejudices were, naturally enough, strong against those who sought to overthrow the system, under which he, and those similarly circumstanced lived and prospered. In deciding on affairs of property, as a magistrate, he was just; but when anything political was in question, his partiality became undisguised; he hated the Pope, without well knowing who, or what the Pope really was, and toasted “the glorious, pious, and immortal memory, of the great and good King William,” without having the most remote idea, as to which of the three sovereigns of that name, who had filled the British throne, those flattering epithets were applied.

The yeoman chief was not accustomed to the elegancies of the table; and for the express purpose of enjoying his awkwardness, old Moore, the butler, encumbered him with every article that could possibly be required. To a green wine glass he most emphatically objected at the very outset.

“Take that away, my good man, I don’t like the colour; I’m sure, ma’am,” (to the mistress,) “you didn’t mean to insult me by putting a rebelly glass before me, but common fellows, such as servants, are always disloyal. I’ll never deny my colours, true blue, ma’am, and I’d remain dry ’til I got the murrain, afore I’d drink a drop of liquor out of anything green; upon my conscience, since the Papishes are beginning to hould up their heads, I can’t bear to look at a grass field, and my lawn is ploughed up for oats, that I may have something yallow, even if it isn’t altogether orange before me.”

As dinner proceeded, and the wine circulated, Captain Lammy lost a good deal of the awe with which the well-known station and character of Mrs. O’Mahony had inspired him; he even felt inwardly comforted at having it in his power hereafter to say, that he had been a guest at her house. By the time the cloth was removed he became as free and easy as if he were at home. “You’ll excuse me, ma’am, but being a loyal man and placed in important posts, I can’t help giving the ‘Health of the King, God bless him.’ Fill your glass, and don’t shirk it, Mr. Blake, it’s dangerous in these times, sir, to be considered doubtful, and I’d like to protect you, and make a good report of you if I could—upon my soul, I would—on Mrs. O’M’s account—there, now, all’s right—hurrah—hurrah—hurrah—and now, ladies and gentlemen, another bumper for the ‘constitution’—our glorious constitution that descended to us from our Dutch ancestors, and was brought over from Holland by William the Conqueror. Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah; you did that right, Mr. Blake, I think I’ll be able to make something iv ye yet; I’m not afeerd of Captain Jack, ma’am, it’s his duty to be loyal, for he lives by the King. And, now, Mrs. O’Mahony, honey,” (putting his hand upon her shoulder,) “I know you’ll let me give just one little toast more, and no offence; upon my conscience, ma’am, it’s a pity

ye're a Papist, for so hospitable a woman ought to be a Protestant; it's more genteel and more fitting for a person having such a stake in the country as you have; now that I'm intimate with you, to tell you the truth, I was often ashamed to see your carriage drawn up at the door of a common Mass-house; and, believe me, the times is coming when it'll be hard for the likes of you, if you continue in idolatry, to keep yer lands. Now, Captain Jack, set a good example, and Mr. Blake, now don't you be getting rumbunctious; fill yer glass, higher if you please, sir—to the very brim. Here's to the 'Glorious, pious, and immortal memory of the great and good King William, that saved us from brass money and wooden shoes,'—hurrah, hurrah, hurrah—

'If the Papishes stir, sirs, we'll give them the rope;
So up with the orange, and to hell with the Pope.'

"When I dined with the General the other day, he added a great deal more to the toast that I forget. He's a queer fellow that, an' I'm sure he'd fight well if he was thirty years younger, and wasn't so troubled with the gout. He gave us a great description of the French that their threatening us with; why, ma'am, they're no bigger nor 'lepregauns,' and 'they're fed upon frogs,' if all he says be true; but, upon my conscience, I doubt that, for he wanted to persuade me that the world was round, and wheeled upside down every four-and-twenty hours; sure, every one knows that if that was the case, when it came to our turn to be undermost we'd all drop off; and he spoke of the stars being fixed, when I could take the Bible myself that I've seen them falling in kreelfuls."

Being called on for his toast, Captain Jack gave "The Prince of Wales!" and when Mike's came, he proposed "Edmund Burke."

"Hum—hum," said Lammy, sagaciously shaking his head, "that's suspicious; before I drink to him, tell me honestly, Mr. Blake, is he a Papist, for I never had the pleasure of hearing of him afore." On being assured to the contrary—"Well, then, here's to him, although," he added, "all I can say is, that it's a queer name to open a church pew with."

It may easily be supposed that the yeomanry officer's conduct and conversation was not agreeable to his society, but he was too far beneath Mike's notice to excite his anger, and there was much to be gained by allowing him to take his own way. As he became drunk he became communicative, and Mrs. O'Mahony managed to extract from him all the information she required relative to the stations and intended movements of the yeomanry corps, then the only military force in that part of the country. At ten o'clock, by which time Captain Lammy was as far gone as it was prudent to make him, the tramp of horses announced the arrival of his escort, and "the mistress" took the opportunity of making a last request—

"Ah, then, Captain dear, I nearly forgot; I intended sending to town to-morrow for a pass for our herdsman, Barney Cullen, and his boy, who'll be going in a few days to Dublin with some sheep, and sure you ought to be able to give one as well as the best of them."

"And so I am, ma'am—and so I will; I'm a justice of quorum for three counties, and I'd like to see the man, from here to Dublin, that I'd dare to refuse my pass; I give scores of them. Get me the pen and ink, you needn't mind any paper, ma'am, I always carry the printed forms in my pocket ready for business, ma'am." As he drew the papers out, one dropped upon the carpet, and was immediately covered by Mrs. O'Mahony's foot, who kept her guest's attention continually engaged while he was filling up the official document.

"Aye, aye, ma'am, I know Barney, ('Long Barney,' they call him) well, and a decent man he is, and come of decent people; and a right good hand at the stick—the Cullens was always a fighting faction. Who's the other?—his boy—aye, Sheemee Reilly—a devil that same Sheemee is. Well, you see, ma'am, I know everything about every body. Willy Hawkins, my sergeant-major, is wide awake—he'd be a knowing bird 'id escape him. When he comes, ma'am, I'd be obliged, you see, if ye'd bring him up to get a glass of punch in the parlour, and, you see, it 'id be just as well that he saw there was no one here but ourselves."

When "the mistress" had possession of the pass, and pushed the fallen form well under the table, where it could not be seen, with her foot, she willingly assented to Lammy's proposition, and ordered the servant to open the hall-door and call in Sergeant Hawkins.

"It's hard work this," said her guest, as he prepared to depart, "it's hard work this, ma'am, to be obliged to be going out at all hours, night and day, and it's harder, ma'am, on the men than on me; such of them, you see, as is mounted on mares is obliged to bring the foals that's too young to be weaned about with them, which you see is very troublesome to our manœuvres, and a great loss sometimes to themselves. Tommy Nott, poor man—you know Tommy, ma'am—a true-blue to the back-bone—a fellow that 'id burn a chapel or shoot a priest, if I bid him, ma'am—he lost a fine horse foal, that died from over-work the other day, and when I claimed compensation from the General, the answer I got was, 'that he wished every other foal in the corps was dead, too;' that's not right—that's not the way to treat loyal men that's sacrificing themselves to support Protestant succession in church and state."

By this time the sergeant had entered, and as he stood quaffing the tumbler of punch, which Moore had prepared for him, the gentlemen were horrified to see the chicken-girl at his elbow—

"Plase yer honour, ma'am," she simpered out, "the butler sent me up to know if ye wanted any more hot water?"

"You and the butler," quickly replied 'the mistress,' "may go to bed, (aside) or to the devil, if you like—we have a jug-full, and tell him so."

When Captain Lammy got into the open air, the effects of the wine and punch became more manifest, and he was obliged to take the sergeant's arm, as he proceeded towards where the troop was drawn up, and his horse awaited him. When mounted, an operation in which Hawkins was obliged to assist him, he hiccupped out—

"Are ye all there, my honies?"

"All, yer honour—every man-Jack, Captain," was responded from the ranks.

"Then, boys dears, let us do unto others as we would be done unto; animals must be nourished as well as men, and it 'id be a hard case, if after enjoying myself, I didn't remember the innocent creatures that's dependant upon me—so here goes—attention, honies; rear rank, take open order, rein back three paces, and give the foals suck."

"Plase yer honour, Captain," (interrupted the sergeant) "the foals is all at home, and comfortable; we never bring them out on night duty."

"So much the better, sergeant—so much the better—then march, my boys, and go wherever Willy Hawkins tells ye."

"We have but a few houses, that's not far off; to burn the night," said Hawkins, who was now supporting his chief on horseback.

"I'm glad—very glad—to hear that same, Willy, for I'm very, very sleepy."

The yeomanry troop had scarcely left the yard, when the chicken-girl burst into the room, laughing immoderately.

"There was fun—what capital sport—to humbug the stupid fools—to thrust myself under their very eyes, whilst they were seeking me."

"Pardon me, my lord," said Mike, with a severe air; such jokes are not seasonable. I know you set but little value on your own safety, but, in your present position, such levity might have ruined a great cause, and compromised confiding friends."

"True, Mike, true; you justly blame me, but it maybe, perhaps, the last time I shall ever have an opportunity of playing a similar trick, and I could not resist the temptation, and yet the risk of discovery was not wilfully run either. I could not remain in the kitchen when one of those cursed yeomen came in to light his pipe, and Moore, with much presence of mind, sent me on the errand which so much displeased you, so that, in fact, my unwelcome appearance was almost a matter of safety; but concealment is now unnecessary; the hour for action is arrived, when every true-hearted Irishman must avow his sentiments, and prepare to defend them. Hoche is off the coast, and, by God's blessing, to-morrow's sun shall see the Green Flag of Erin floating on her heather-clad mountains. My days of thoughtlessness are passed; my life, until the one great object of my ambition be achieved, is wholly devoted to my country. Now, dear Mrs. O'Mahony, something to eat, with a bottle of mulled port, to drink success to the good cause, and then I bid you farewell—perhaps for ever. Meantime, Mike, prepare for the road; our guide and our horses await us on the opposite side of the lake; before daylight we must reach the French fleet, which, by that time, I hope to find safely anchored in Bantry Bay." As they discussed their hasty supper, Lord Edward suddenly exclaimed—"By the way, Mike, I have a letter directed for your friend, Lieutenant Pennant, which came into my possession accidentally. It fell from his sailor servant's packet, as he crossed the foot-bridge at the Abbey, the other night, while I was concealed under one of the old yew trees. I picked it up, and seeing the direction, was glad to secure it for one who had,

although unintentionally, rendered me so great and recent a service. It may be from some rustic beauty ; you had better have it sent to him."

Mrs. O'Mahony proposed taking charge of it, when Lord Edward, after searching his pockets, declared that he must either have lost or left it behind him in his portmanteau."

The night was dark ; the wind had risen to a gale ; and the boat was often obliged to seek shelter in the lee of an island until the squall descending from the mountains had passed away. At length they caught sight of a dim light, for which they steered, and on reaching the shore, found Darcy already mounted, with two other horses saddled, and ready for the road. "Quick, quick, my lord, you have stayed too long ; we have far to go, and unless we pass the ford and village of Kilcooley, where the yeomen keep guard, before midnight, we cannot reach the bay by daybreak, and the French are in, for I saw the signal-fires myself."

Striking off as he spoke, he led his followers by a sort of sheep track, round the mountain's base, until they reached an open moor, over which they sped rapidly towards a range of hills bounding the off-side of this desolate waste. Arrived there, Darcy turned into an old gravel pit which afforded shelter and concealment, and calling on the gentlemen to dismount, divided a small bag of oats, which he carried before him, amongst the horses. "Let them eat," he said, "while I am away ; it will be the only bit they can take before our journey's end ;" then proceeding cautiously towards the river, on the opposite side of which stood the straggling village of Kilcooley, he entered the stream, and wading through, proceeded straightway towards a light which was burning in the back window of the public-house. Peeping under the corner of a dingy curtain, purposely tucked up on the inside, he had a full view of the occupants of the apartment. It was the guard-room of the yeomanry picket, who had evidently not been long returned from their rounds. Some men were lying on the table ; others were asleep in chairs, while the sergeant and landlord of the house were comfortably enjoying themselves over a steaming jug of punch. The latter, whose attention seemed riveted on the window, soon discovered Darcy's face on the outside, and quickly called upon his companion to join him in a toast, a request which the latter acceded to with hearty good will, draining his tumbler to the very last drop. Fresh supplies of punch and other toasts, soon brought the sergeant to a state of drunkenness, when he insisted on going to see how the horses were made up. "I'm an ould sodger, Mr. Connor, and I wouldn't sleep the night if I wasn't certain that the men did their duty by the beasts that carried them."

"Lor' love ye, sergeant dear, while you were out looking after the sentries in the town, the yeomen that returned with you from patroulling, cleaned their horses until they were as sleek as rats, and it id be cruel to wake them and the poor animals now." The sergeant however persisted in his intention, when the landlord having made a signal to Darcy, said he'd take a look at the night before they went out, while fumbling with the lock of the back-door, he held an underbreath conversation with the guide. "Pass as quickly as you can, I'll keep him engaged until I think you're safe ; but

mind, there is a sentinel at the end of the town, and you must manage him the best way you can, it doesn't matter much what you do with him now, as it's certain the French are at Bantry, they'll rid us of these villains to-morrow, and it will be our turn to hang and burn them."

"It's could and windy, sergeant," (as he returned,) "and in troth, it 'id be better not to disturb the creatures that's snug and comfortable."

The sergeant declared that nothing would prevent his discharging his duty.

"Well, then, at least we'll have another glass to warm us," and while mixing the punch, Connor commenced humming one of the loyal songs of the day, in which, as he anticipated, his companion lustily joined. The noise awoke the trumpeter, whose first impulse was to sound an alarm, but the landlord quickly seized his arm, "Why, then, what on earth would you be about, Mr. Morrow, to blow a blast that 'id waken the town and bring the Captain down on top iv ye?"

"Trumpeter—trumpeter—why, sir," exclaimed the sergeant, "why, sir, would ye dare to sound without orders from your superior officer, ye don't know yer duty, sir, how could ye, that niver saw a riglar regiment in yer life—put up yer trumpet, sir, and wait for commands."

Meantime, Darcy returned to the gravel pit, where he found neither men nor horses; having thoughtlessly left the entrance, Lord Edward and Mike only became sensible of their incaution, when they saw their steeds gallop rapidly past them.

"What's to be done now?" demanded Lord Edward, hastily, as he related the flight of the horses.

"Nothing that I know of," replied Darcy, "but to go back."

"Proceed I will," said Lord Edward, "even if forced to walk."

"Then," rejoined Darcy, "if not taken, we are sure to die of hunger in the mountains."

"The risk must be run, indeed, I ought to be ashamed of my stupidity—it was all my fault, don't blame me, but, like a stout-hearted fellow, lead us on, happen what may."

Darcy remained silent until they had waded the river, then telling his companions to keep close to him, he added, "there's but one thing to be done, and we must risk it."

Advancing quickly to the public-house window, he arrived just as the trumpeter had again settled to sleep, and the landlord and sergeant prepared to quit the room. The latter issued forth, holding a lantern in his hand, and kept rolling from side to side all the time, expatiating "on the necessity of doing one's duty."

As Connor, who followed in the wake of the drunken sergeant, passed where Darcy stood concealed, the latter stepped behind him and whispered—

"We must have three of those horses—shade me from the light in the stables, and when you return to the house keep him drinking and singing until we get off. I'll stand at the window when going."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE NATIONAL POETRY OF POLAND.

THE Poles possess many traits of character which assimilate them to the Irish—an ardent love of freedom, an inextinguishable hatred of tyranny, a devoted attachment to country, piety in peace, and heroic courage in battle, but above all, an indescribable passion for poetry. The irresistible influence which lyric composition exercises over this unhappy people can hardly be understood by foreigners. To one unacquainted with their national character, and the sufferings they endure under the iron despotism of Russia, this passion for poetry seems fabulous. We do not allude in speaking of sufferings to the sporadic persecutions which occasionally crush the Poles when the nest of some wretched conspiracy is laid bare to the wretched government. We allude to the ordinary working-day life of the Poles. The profession of the Catholic religion, for instance, is regarded by the mistrustful government as a symptom of disaffection. It tolerates no universities or scientific institutions, and even the elementary schools are confided to strangers, from the barbarous depths of interior Russia, who have no sympathy with Poland, and cannot speak its language. The censorship, which is at once suspicious and cowardly, subjects every thought and expression to jealous analytical investigation. In the law courts justice is administered by strangers, whose language is often imperfectly understood, and always heartily hated by the Poles. The government endeavours to tear up from the root the customs, peculiarities, and traditions of Poland. A scornful discredit is flung on the venerable recollections of the past, and the study of antiquity visited with rebuke. Every patriot is subjected to the sleepless vigilance of the police, who watch him with the eyes of Argus, to seize on him with the talons of the Harpies. The popular ear is constantly dinned with the accents of threat, and the popular heart cowed by the objurgations of punishment. Indeed, were it not for national feeling, Poland would be a corpse, and even this last pulse of moral life must be long since extinct, had not religion and poetry thrown open to Polish nationality an inviolable asylum.

In the present article we shall not do more than allude to the painful part which religion performs in this melancholy drama. As to poetry, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say, that in common with religion, it directs the public conscience. To the persecuted Pole the productions of his poets are not intellectual luxuries, quoted in splendid drawing-rooms, and discussed freely in public places; they are written by exiles, and furtively smuggled into Russian Poland by contraband traffickers, who literally sell them for their weight in gold. The pale and anxious reader, in the dead of night, is surrounded by eager listeners, who are well known, implicitly trusted, and sworn to keep the secret, while in the street outside lurks a faithful friend, who keeps a sharp look-out for the police. It is impossible to describe the feverish and breathless haste with which the new poem is again and again devoured. It is impossible to paint the agitation and

anxiety, the varied emotions which flush their faces and light their eyes, as they listen to a production which, after being read again and again, is finally committed to the flames, lest the vigilant authorities should catch a glimpse or fragment of its existence. But the mind of every soul present is glowing and imbued with sentiments which will never be forgotten. In assemblies of this character, in this mysterious manner, in midnight meetings, the youths of Poland become familiar with the burning sentiments of their national poets, who, like those of Ireland, dwell incessantly on hope and freedom, virtue and battle, a splendid futurity, and a liberated fatherland. It is not from public schools, it is from productions like "Father Thadens," or the "Ancestors of Mickiewicz," that the young men of Poland learn the history and hopes of their country. "There are only two nations in Europe," says a Polish writer, "whose education has been exclusively poetical—the Greeks of the heroic ages, and the Poles of the nineteenth century." We do not insinuate that such an education is desirable, but assert that it is the only one possible to the Poles, and the wonderful influence which poetry exercises in Poland may, we think, be explained by this absence of every other kind of education.

The power which the poet enjoys is not unattended with keen pangs and anxious cares, nor at all times exempt from the bitter anguish of remorse. Mickiewicz, in the banquet scene in "Wallenrod," has given us a startling description of the exalted dignity and miserable wretchedness of the Polish poet. Many of our readers are, no doubt, familiar with the incidents of this fiction. At an early age Wallenrod is torn from his native country, transferred to a foreign soil, and reared amongst the enemies of Poland. He rises in a foreign land to a station of social dignity, and would, no doubt, have forgotten Poland, were he not reminded of his birth-place, and fired with hatred of tyranny, by the presence of an old *Waidelote*, who pleads, with soul-subduing accents by his side, in behalf of his native country. A great scene—a spacious hall is described. The banquet blazes with the light of torches, when an old minstrel, blind and feeble, totters into the apartment, and in the grim presence of the stern tyrants themselves, but in a language they cannot understand, he reminds the exiled Pole of his fatherland—all its sorrows—all its heroism—all its beauties—all its sufferings—reminds him of the oaths he had pronounced—the duties he had pledged himself to perform. Subjugated and fascinated by the minstrel, Wallenrod, in the same language, renews his old oath, but at the same time throws the responsibility of the consequences on the minstrel: "You urge me to war," he exclaims, "and war we shall have, but you, old man, must be accountable for the bloodshed which shall ensue. The sound of your lyre is the prelude of disaster; the subject of your song is ever desolation and death, the penalty you leave to us, and indeed, for that matter, the glory. By the syren accents of your lyre you lure the children of Poland into the pathways of perdition, and fill them with an insane love of country—a mad desire for glory. The words that you breathe haunt the memory of the youthful, like the vengeful spectre of a foe pouring blood into the banquet wine-cup. Too often have I yielded to the fascination of your

verses, and now again I yield to them, but your present success will be my future destruction."

The preceding picture, which gives us the night-side of the poet's power, alludes merely to the moral responsibility of the poet, but the material fact of publication results likewise in disastrous responsibilities. Nothing can be more painful than the situation of the poet who, urged by a consciousness of power and stimulated by a strong sense of duty, fans with the winged words of inspired song the smouldering fire of patriotism, flickering languidly in the inner altar of his country's heart, but who, at the same time, remembers that the verses which he writes may result in the exile, disgrace, or death of his readers. The fate of Levitoux is a case in point: Having been found in possession of a copy of "The Ancestors," this youth was flung into a dungeon in the Citadel of Warsaw. Trembling lest he should betray his comrades—lest the secret of their existence should be wrung from him by the rack—dreading his own weakness, and exasperated by torture, he took, in his chained and jangling hands, the rush-light which lighted his cell and placed it with difficulty under his bed, and burned himself alive. Though Poland, at that period, was habituated to calamity—familiar with every aspect of disaster—the whole country was deeply moved and concerned by this deplorable suicide of a boy of seventeen. But the greatest sufferer was, perhaps, the poet Mickiewicz. The idea of having been the involuntary cause of this suicide haunted and tortured him for years, and whenever its remembrance flashed upon his mind his mental agony became intolerable. That very remarkable writer, "The Bard without a Name," as the Poles term him, likewise suffered from this melancholy species of literary success. He published a little volume in Paris, entitled "The Temptation." In this work he described what was believed to be a real event—"The Author's Interview with the Emperor Nicholas." The poem was republished by the students of Lithuania in a local journal, which received the *imprimatur* of the censor, doubtless, unaware of the object of the poem. The authorities at St. Petersburg were speedily apprised of its true nature—an inquiry was instituted, sentence pronounced, and hundreds of young men were seen shortly after marching in chains into the deserts of Siberia. These young men constituted the hope and flower of the youth of Lithuania, and the grief and desolation which their banishment occasioned in the best families in the country was horrible and heart-rending. It is highly possible, however, that the "Bard without a Name" suffered, if possible, more intensely in the unbroken quiet of his secure retreat, than the very mothers of those exiles.

Of all the productions of this anonymous poet, perhaps the finest is that in which he evokes from their forgotten graves the heroes of Poland—the stern chiefs and glorious kings of her ancient history. Sheathed in antique armour and plumed with helmets, a vast assemblage of warriors arise silently before the poet, who is at first abashed and discouraged by their shadowy and awe-inspiring presence. He resumes confidence, however, as the mild voice of Stephen Czarniecki—one of the purest of the

past patriots of Poland—falls on his charmed ear, and rivets his wrapt attention. The poet, who speaks in his turn, does not in his reply confine his solicitude exclusively to Poland—he speaks of the whole family of man. He compares the century which preceded Christ to the century in which we exist, and discovers many analogies in these two epochs. At *that* time the soil had been upheaved by the earthquake of social war, and the most ancient institutions overturned and ruined. At that time a Cæsar arose, the brilliancy of whose genius for war and government enabled him to save and rescue society, tottering on the verge of destruction—to re-establish social order, and inaugurate a prosperous epoch of material civilization. At that time, as at present, deep-seated dissatisfaction and discontent prevailed—the mind of man was in a state of agony, and the ruinous results of a great moral revolution were everywhere visible. A divine man appeared, who inculcated on his disciples a mild law of love—who preached fraternity amongst individuals, and whose church abolished slavery. He was put to death, but subsequently came to life in spite of his tormentors, and his opinions and doctrines were spread far and wide over the world. The relations between individuals have been modified and ameliorated by this law, but the relations between nations have remained unmitigated and unimproved. Men often act like Christians to their fellow-men, but nations always act like pagans to their brother nations. The law of nations is a heathen code, which sanctions rapine, and spoliation, and conquest, and oppression, precisely as in the time of paganism. There is one nation, however, whose conduct has been characterised by Christian justice, which has never inflicted conquest nor exacted plunder, but whose guide in international affairs has been always the law of Christ. That virtuous nation has exercised its power for the protection of the weak, and drawn the sword to avert invasion from the neighbouring states—never to acquire conquests for itself. Yet, after having thus saved others, this martyr-nation has been scourged, tortured, and subjected to an agonizing death. In the concluding lines of the poem the resurrection of the nation in question is celebrated with rapturous hosannahs, and peace and good will are described as thenceforth established by the Polish people among the nations of the world.

The doctrine inculcated by the anonymous poet is, that vengeance is fruitless, and hatred impotent. The Poles, he says, should labour to surpass their masters in moral goodness, instead of making a vain parade of their national calamities. But the question which next suggests itself is, “how is this moral superiority to be attained?” By sacrifice and self-devotion, answers the poet, Poland should expect her deliverance, not from the evils she might inflict on the stranger, but from the development of virtue in the bosom of her own children. He advises his countrymen to depend on the definitive justice of God, for the final adjudication of their cause. They should give over the labour of dissimulation and conspiracy, which only tarnish their cause, and sully the purity of “the soul of Poland.” They should cling to faith, in spite of trials, submit to death, instead of inflicting destruction, and mount the scaffold like the early Christians, with

confession on their lips, and the crucifix on their bosoms. The painful duties of Polish slavery, which he truly denominates "sacrifices," are thus set forth by the national poet.

The man who preached a doctrine so tame to a nation like the Poles, the most fiery, warlike, and impetuous in Europe, must have had the daring courage, and the fervent faith of an apostle. The consummate art, and passionate enthusiasm, by the way, with which he inculcates this doctrine, cannot be described. He implicitly believes, that were his beloved country once converted to this martyr-creed of patriotism, she should be saved, her foot-steps should tread the line of victory, she should be free from the temptations of despair, and the reverses of misfortune. "What matters it to Poland, if her scornful adversaries scout her alike, impotent and stubborn. What matter if they call on her, in cruel mockery, to prepare her coffin and her shroud, and die at once with decency, ere she is forced to die by violence. Let her not heed them. The day will come when these very censors shall implore her to rise and walk. Meantime, Poland," he adds, "must learn to bear with patient equanimity, the outrageous insults which are ever lavished on misfortune, and meet insulting arrogance with silent dignity." Before the angel of pride fell from heaven, she had a sister in the skies, who is still an inmate of those starry mansions. "Her name," says the Polish poet, "is dignity."

Our readers need not be told that about two years ago, the three monarchs of the North held a meeting at Warsaw. The liberals of Europe denounced this meeting as the inauguration of a new "holy alliance." A conspiracy of kings against the liberties of Christendom. The interview of these sceptred tyrants, made Poland shudder. Apprehensive of some new outrage on her misery, Poland started convulsively to life, shook off the shroud of silence, in which she had been so long enveloped, and commenced the agitation which reached its climax, a few weeks since, in rebellion. It is very possible that our readers are not aware that this agitation commenced with "an office for the dead," a solemn requiem, which, at the same moment was celebrated in the three principal churches for the three principal poets of Poland:—Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and the "Bard without a Name." These melancholy obsequies were followed by that famous insurrection of the people of Warsaw, who rose and protested against their tyrants with no arms save the Cross of Christ, and the unfurled banner of their country. In conformity with the advice of their national bard, they submitted to death on this occasion, without inflicting destruction. When these insurgents were asked by their oppressor, who was evidently perplexed and puzzled by the new and unexpected attitude of his victims, "What do you want?" their reply was, "our country." We may be permitted to suppose, that at these words, which had been suggested by himself, the spirit of the "anonymous poet," thrilled with profound and patriotic emotion, his countrymen had realised what he had only imagined, and the verses which had been so long anonymous were endorsed by an entire community.

It is natural to expect, that in a country like Poland, so long over-

whelmed with disaster, a tone of melancholy should breathe through its national poetry. Such is the case. Nor is this all; an absence of lucidity is likewise a characteristic of the poetry of Poland. Owing to the tyranny which oppresses this unfortunate race, the Poles have acquired the power of comprehending a hint, where others require "a whole history." If, according to the proverb, "a word be enough for the wise," it is no exaggeration to say that half a word is enough for the afflicted. Besides, the Poles, as we said before, peruse the productions of their poets in fear and trembling. As these writings reach the country like Sybelline leaves, it is natural that they should speak the enigmatical language of the oracles. The Muse that arrives in a furtive and mysterious manner, inevitably employs language which is furtive and mysterious. This sad and gloomy tone is only to be expected under the circumstances. The night of slavery must vanish from the land, ere the darkness and melancholy which characterize its poetry disappear from the lyric breathings of the Bards of Poland.

MARRIED IN SPITE OF MY AUNT.

A TALE IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.

My aunt was secretly giving him encouragement, being in hopes that by getting my name spoken of in connection with his, I might be induced to marry him in time. I discovered it by being congratulated one day on the excellent match I was going to make.

"What match?" said I.

"Mr. Graham, to be sure" said the lady, "an old acquaintance of your aunt's."

"It is a mistake," said I; "I am not going to be married to any one, least of all to Mr. Graham. I wish people could find some other amusement than making up imaginary engagements for their friends. What is the meaning of all this *furor* for match-making?"

"Why, Emily," she replied, "I am only repeating the words of your aunt; she told me, and I am sure it is a most excellent match. What more do you expect? Are you waiting for a duke or an earl?"

"My dear madam," I answered, "I have not waited so very long that there need be much anxiety about my future prospects. I am not quite eighteen yet, and I mean to go about amusing myself until I am at least twenty-five, and then I shall not marry at all if I take the notion; at least, not until I meet a '*man*.'"

"You are a strange girl," said she.

I went in at once to speak to my aunt, and endeavour to convince her, if possible, of the injustice she was doing me; but she only listened to me as one would to a foolish child, who did not know what was for her good. I left her in despair, and going into the drawing-room, sat down to think

was there no way of getting out of this hateful position. I thought of Mr. Ellis, and was almost inclined to write to him to tell him of my annoyances, and beg of him to contradict the report of my engagement, if it should come to his ears. This was my first impulse, but on second thoughts I felt afraid. It is too bad, in the present state of society, that a woman cannot have a friend in one of the opposite sex. We cannot write to an unmarried man, on even the most indifferent subject, without having the world, (and most frequently the man himself,) attributing motives to us, which are sometimes very far from our minds. I must confess that I myself felt it would look very suspicious to write to Mr. Ellis on this subject, so, therefore, I did not, but, unfortunately, I did far worse.

I made up my mind to commence a violent flirtation with Mr. Hastings, in order to convince the people I was not engaged to Mr. Graham. He came in the evenings, as my aunt kept a kind of "open house" in that way, and we often had chance acquaintances dropping in "to tea." Full of my new project, I made myself so agreeable to him that he was quite dumfounded at first; however, he soon found the use of his tongue, and tired me out with poetical quotations—beautiful thoughts and conceptions some of them—but, coming from him, they seemed to be as out of place as the robes of the "Empress" would be on a coarse, red-faced servant girl. "What right has he to be borrowing ideas whose beauty he can neither understand nor appreciate?" thought I. I did not let this appear, for I listened to everything he said as if I were quite enchanted, despising myself the while for doing so, and becoming more miserable every moment; whilst I laughed and talked myself into a state of feverish excitement, so that I attracted the attention of one or two old ladies, who were keeping up a kind of *sotto voce* conversation on my merits and demerits, for I overheard one or two of their remarks. One was that I was turning out a dreadful flirt. I did not feel, however, as if I cared much what the world thought of me. There was a kind of reaction going on in my mind; from excessive sensitiveness as to the opinions of the world, I was going to the opposite extreme,—that of taking pleasure in daring its censures. The last state was quite as full of misery to me as the first, though I tried to persuade myself I was in the highest of spirits and good humour.

Mr. Ellis came in after tea, and one would think his presence would have been enough to bring me to my senses, seeing the respect I had for him. But no; some mad spirit seemed to have taken possession of me, and I continued my flirtation with Hastings, and even sang a song for him especially—"Dearest, I Think of Thee,"—and allowed him to take a pansy from my bouquet, though if he had known how he "*occupied my thoughts*," he would not have been at all flattered. During this time Mr. Ellis seemed to be quite interested in the conversation of my aunt and her elderly friends, but I once caught his eye fixed on me with a sorrowful and reproachful expression. I felt I had lowered myself in his estimation, and the thought was like a dagger through my heart; but, after all, what right had he to look reproachfully at me? He was nothing to me, and I was only doing what every girl does, and, besides, it was none of his business.

When I went up to my own room, I looked in the glass.

"Yes, there you are," said I, "and well you look,—eyes like a stag's at bay, crimson cheeks, and lips drawn back with a smile, the very mockery of mirth." I turned away, and felt I am growing old very fast; ten years older, even, from this one night's acting. "Is there no escape for me? Must I marry this fool?" I asked, "for I cannot repeat to-night's performance in order to escape my doom; the one is as bad as the other."

I rose in the morning in a better frame of mind; my feverish excitement was all gone; I had reflected on the subject, and knowing that I could not be forced to marry any man against my will, I gave up tormenting myself about what "*people would say*," and began to occupy myself at my former employments—music, drawing, etc., which I had neglected latterly. I chose a new piece for practice which was very difficult; I was pleased with its difficulty, for I wished to have something to overcome which would require a good deal of physical exertion, and maybe I did not make my poor piano pay for the faults of aunt and the world in general; I hammered at it in a most desperate manner—I can play that piece to this day with a dash and brilliancy which sometimes astonishes myself—but I must acknowledge I had great difficulty in bringing down the pianissimo passages to the proper degree of softness. I kept myself continually occupied, and soon recovered my natural gaiety of heart. My aunt really loved me, and I could do as I liked in everything not connected with matrimonial speculations. She had left off tormenting me as to singing, playing, etc., having made up her mind that I would marry Graham in the long run—in fact, that "my market was made," and what was the use of music or drawing after that—I had a different idea, but I did not think it necessary to argue the question.

Everything seemed to go on very smoothly for some time. I took care to contradict the report of my engagement wherever I went, and so did my aunt, at my request, but her contradiction was so faint and so equivocal that it was worse than an affirmation; but seeing I could not do anything more, I left off "*bothering my head*" about it, and permitted the noodle to come *maundering* about our place, as it seemed to make him quite contented to only sit in a corner, and stare at me. He was completely subdued, poor wretch, and I often laughed when I thought of how differently he looked on the first night I met him.

About this time we were invited to an evening party, in which there were a few "*tableaux vivants*" to be introduced.

The lady to whose house we were going had a miniature painting, by an Irish lady artist, whose name I forget. It represented a fair young wife, with golden curls, and an innocent youthful face, talking to her husband, who was bending over her chair, with an expression on his face of extreme and protecting love, whilst at the half-open door was standing a woman, evidently deserted, equally handsome with the wife, but of a different style of beauty. Mrs. B—— was anxious to have this scene represented "*en tableau*," and I, being dark, was chosen to act the part of

the poor deserted one ; whilst the happy wife was to be the part of a young lady who had come to spend a few days with our intended hostess. She was a beautiful girl, with exquisitely chiselled features, skin of the fairest tint imaginable, and golden curls, to which no painter could ever do justice. She had a pretty name too, Eva Fitzgerald. I thought, as I looked at her, that I could not picture that face with an expression of misery on it. I felt she would always be happy and look happy.

I had no objection to perform the character—I had not much to do, only to stand at the door, and look miserable, and that came very natural to me, notwithstanding my gay disposition. When we went, I found all my male friends assembled excepting William Ellis. The tableaux were to be the last thing : dancing was to occupy the early part of the evening.

Eva Fitzgerald and I divided between us the spoils of the night—I must confess that the greater share fell to her, but I was not likely to fret about that, not setting any very high value on the attentions of those present. I was every minute watching for the entrance of William Ellis, who I knew would come, for he had said so. He came at last, and I tried to read from his countenance whether he still retained a bad opinion of me—I had not seen him since the night of the flirtation, as he had been from home,) but he looked in his usual every-day-way, and merely shaking hands with me, passed on and joined the group at the piano, who were listening to Miss Fitzgerald singing.

“He is just like every other man,” thought I, “easily caught by a new face, but, after all, it is only natural ; she is very beautiful, and—strange, she appears to know him very well. I almost think I heard her call him William.” It is very strange. I had not long to think on the subject, for we were summoned for the tableaux in a few moments. I found that William Ellis was to be the husband, and as I stood in the proper attitude, waiting for the curtains to rise, I could not help being struck by the contrast between my two fellow-performers. Certainly, she personated the fair young wife to the life, and he the manly affectionate husband. There was some delay about the raising of the curtain, I heard a few whispered words, which fixed me to the spot in which I stood—I seemed doomed to be a listener.

“They are to be married in a few months, and a handsome couple they will make ; his practice is very good. To be so young a man, he is an excellent physician.”

I gave one agonised look at the pair, and during that moment the curtain arose, but I was unconscious of it ; my whole soul was filled with despair and jealousy. Yes, the knowledge came on me like a thunderbolt, that I loved that man. I who would “not be won unsought.” How long I stood, I know not, the curtain fell amidst thunders of applause, but I stood fixed, forgetful of where I was ; his look recalled me to my senses, it expressed pity ; he knew all then, and pitied me. Yes, my pride had certainly met with a fall, when I had lived to be pitied by a man for “unsought love.”

“Pride, pride,” I said, rising suddenly, “come to my aid once more.

I will crush this feeling out of my heart, I will die, rather than let the world see how low I have fallen. Die," I laughed bitterly, "no, no, that would be too happy a fate, I must live, to suffer worse than death every day, until I have won the victory over myself, and now to commence the acting, which is to form part of my every-day life, until that is accomplished." I arose, and rejoined the company, receiving their congratulations on the "magnificent" manner in which I had performed my part, to which I replied smilingly. Eva Fitzgerald had a cluster of beaux round her, amongst whom I observed Mr. Graham, but where was William Ellis? he was not in the room. I was glad of it, and felt better able to sustain my part from his absence, but still it was strange he should be absent from his lady love, who seemed very easy on the subject, and was receiving, with evident pleasure, the attentions of the fellows around her, especially of my quondam adorer Graham, who looked as if he were disposed to transfer his allegiance to her, having probably found out she was engaged to another.

I roused myself by a mighty effort, into something like attention, and tried to listen to a disquisition on acting, from an elderly gentleman beside me, who was labouring very hard to prove, that one never acts so well, as when their feelings are perfectly disengaged, in fact, that a good actor never feels what he is saying. I did not *quite* agree with him, however; I thought that I was in a very good position to prove the truth or falsity of his theory. In the midst of a reply of mine to one of my companion's remarks, I looked up and saw William Ellis standing near the door. He had come in unobserved by me. I saw that he was deadly pale, and more, *I saw that he loved me*. Yes, there was no mistaking that mournful heart-broken look—I saw it all at a glance. Yes, he had loved me from the first, but having been engaged to another, he could not say so, but his eyes had been tell-tales all along. I had not been won unsought after all, if looks are anything, and he would not despise me, being as unhappy as myself. My pride broke down utterly. I was obliged to hasten home, and after locking my room-door, gave way to a fit of hysterical weeping, which took away a great deal of the weight off my heart. After this, I felt almost happy, yes, although he was going to marry another, and would soon forget me, still he HAD loved me. That fact stood forth in characters never to be obliterated, if he should SWEAR to the contrary, I would not believe him—and now I had only to keep out of his way, let him get married to his pretty wife, and forget me; and perhaps, when he is an old man, I may have him as a friend, but no man shall ever take his place in my heart. I can live and die an old maid as my aunt, and a great many women, better than I, have done. Now, a great many of my young lady readers may think, that such a transition as mine, from a gay, laughing, childish girl, to a woman, capable of feeling so deeply and acutely, is unnatural, but they would be mistaken, they may live to find, that it is perfectly possible. Better for them, if they do not, for extreme sensibility is conducive to more pain than pleasure in this world of ours, and many a smiling exterior, hides a very sad heart. Mine was sad enough, Heaven knows, but I did not encourage any morbid fancies. I wrote no whining poetry about "silent sorrows," nor did I sit

down to brood over my unhappiness, as many girls do, until they sometimes fret themselves into a consumption, and create a vast amount of misery amongst their relatives. I did not read "*Lalla Rook*," nor the "*Sorrows of Werter*," but I tried to find some *useful* occupation, in the pursuing of which I might feel I was doing some good—and—I kept out of his way. One day, whilst working at a small oil painting, which I was doing for my aunt, she (my aunt) came into the room, and fidgeted about for a long time, until she had me in a fever. I was very nervous, till at last, seeing she had something to say, I laid down my pencil.

"What is it, aunt?" said I.

"What is what," was my answer.

"I see you have something to tell me, and I cannot go on with my painting until I hear it; so, like a good old soul, do not keep me lingering with ungratified curiosity. Out with it whatever it is?"

"Well, then, Emily, I may just as well tell you that you are in a fair way of losing the best match that ever a girl in your position could expect, and all through your own fault. Ah, if I am not to be pitied after all the trouble and work I had in bringing that young man to the point, and making him *propose*, and now to see that you have let him slip through your fingers, and be caught by an artful minx, who pretends to be engaged to one man whilst she inveigles another; and then, to think that it is all your own fault, and that you might have had him with his beautiful house and property, and would let yourself be cut out by a yellow-haired chit, who is not to be compared to you. Oh! dear me, dear me, but I am an unfortunate woman."

"What is all this, aunt?" A ray of hope had sprung up within me.

"Only that Mr. Henry Graham is never away from Miss Fitzgerald's elbow. In the house or out of it, at home or abroad, there he is, following her about like a common fool."

"I am delighted, aunt, to find you are beginning to appreciate his perfections at last. That last remark of yours shows me you are coming round to my opinion," and I gave the first light-hearted laugh I had given for some time.

"Now, Emily, if you laugh in that way, I will be positively angry with you. Laughing, indeed, when you ought to be crying bitter tears, for how I am to get you off my hands I do not know, after having been jilted by that ridiculous puppy of a jackanapes, who, if he had no money, would be pushed out of the way by any girl with a spark of spirit. Oh, this is a queer world, and you are a nice girl, indeed, with all your advantages, to let yourself be thrown over for the sake of a wax-doll of a little baggage, a husband-hunting chit, as I am sure she is, with all her innocent looks—ah, I hate a husband-hunter."

"So do I, aunt," said I, but she went on quite unconscious.

"You may win him back yet, Emily, if you will only make yourself agreeable. Couldn't you knit him a purse, or work a smoking cap for him, or something in that way? What is the use of your having learnt all these things at school if you don't turn them to some advantage? How do

you ever mean to come through the world? any other girl like you would have lots of rings and bracelets and everything by this time; and there you are, and you would not even accept of the trumpery brooch which Mr. Hastings brought you from Paris, and you have never given the smallest present to any man of your acquaintance. Come, my dear, work some nice little thing for him, and I shall send it with a note from myself. You'll find he'll soon be back again."

"I hate a husband-hunter, aunt."

"Yes, my dear, and so do I: but you need not hunt, the smallest attention from you will be sufficient."

"I'll never marry, aunt, but be an old maid, like yourself; we can live very comfortably here; I am growing old, and have serious notions of getting a cat; but I wonder when this wedding is to come off? I think I will volunteer to be bridesmaid."

My poor aunt was so enraged that she ran out of the room, and I ran out into the garden, feeling quite unable to endure the restraint of being imprisoned within any habitation built by the hands of man, so exuberant were my feelings of delight. I felt certain Eva would marry Graham, and then William Ellis would be free; and then, had I not told my aunt I would be an old maid and keep a cat, and so I would, of course, if he didn't ask me.

Yes, she was just the kind of smiling, happy-looking, placid, comfortable being who would marry any man, provided he had the means of keeping her surrounded with luxuries and indulgences—let him but keep that sunny brow free from the shadow of every worldly care, and all would be right—she would not ask for much love, in fact, would rather not have it, not being able to understand such nonsense, and (unless I was very much mistaken,) being totally incapable of giving any in return.

I wandered about in delightful spirits, occasionally singing a snatch of a song, and feeling as child-like again as if I had never known what it was to suffer. When I had tired myself out I sat down in the summer-house and fell into a dreamy state, thinking of nothing particular, but feeling very happy. Everything seemed delightful, the birds were singing in the trees, a butterfly was flitting from flower to flower, and there was a bee humming about with that delicious lazy drone, which always gives me the idea of peaceful, contented industry, seeking nothing more than a subsistence, and not forgetting to enjoy what it has in a continual struggle to obtain more. I must have been sitting there for a long time when I heard the sound of hasty footsteps on the gravel, I thought I knew the step. Yes, there was William Ellis hurrying to meet me. I saw by his face that all was right, and sat down again like one in a dream, but he rushed in, and in fact, behaved very rudely, I told him he was an impudent fellow, and asked him "What did he mean by such disrespectful conduct?" but, instead of being ashamed of himself, he only laughed at me, and said I *must* marry him. Must, indeed! just imagine that; I tried to look dignified, but it was of no use, he was such a provoking fellow, and I had to consent at last. He would take no refusal; he laughed at the idea, treating me like a child as

usual; and after he had explained to me that Miss Fitzgerald had given him his congé, and was going to be married to Henry Graham, he went off to ask my aunt's consent, which he obtained very easily, as she was afraid I might never have another chance, having been *jilted* so shamefully.

I could hardly describe the annoyance I got from my gentleman to fix the day for our wedding, and I was actually obliged to consent to marry him in a month, just to get rid of him. I wanted him to wait until I should be twenty-five, but he would not hear of it; and here I am now, an old married woman, when I ought to be going about amusing myself, as I see other girls doing who are not a bit younger than myself. I must say, he has not turned out a *very* bad husband. I might give him a few words of praise only that he is looking over my shoulder as I am writing, expecting, no doubt, to catch me in the fact, for the vanity of that man is something inconceivable, as he showed in the way he asked me to marry him—as if I could not refuse him, indeed!

And there is my aunt, too. The poor soul fancies she had something to do in getting me married, when, if she only knew it, she would have ruined my prospects for ever, if it had not been for my own determined resistance. If I had just seconded her plans, I would have frightened all the men away, for there is such a spirit of contradiction in these strange animals, and such a taste for overcoming obstacles, that if we let them think we care about them, they sneak off immediately. I must say my husband found me a very easy conquest, but I don't acknowledge it to him. I maintain that I always upheld my dignity. *He* says I was the first to propose—*by my looks*, but that is only a little of his usual impudence. Of one thing, however, I am certain. If my aunt had shown any anxiety to noose him I would not now be Mrs. W. Ellis; and, in conclusion, I give this advice to all my fair readers, who do not wish to die old maids: "Get rid of matchmaking mammas and aunts."

APRIL.

SWEET nymph of smiles and sunny tears,
Fair harbinger of May;
Rude March before thee disappears,
And oh! how thy meek presence cheers,
Inspiring hopes, dispelling fears,
All nature seems to say,

The fields that winter hid in snow,
Are clothed with lively green;
The frost-winged winds have ceased to blow,
Long silent streams now murmuring flow,
Anemonés and violets glow,
And blooms the Floral Queen!

The crocus from its golden shell
 Hath leaped to greet the sun ;
 The joyless yew, that loves to dwell
 Where sorrow lives, appears to swell
 With gladness, and its leaflets tell
 That thy mild reign's begun.

The woodland birds to give thee hail
 Pour one exultant voice ;
 Wild flowers with odours fill the vale,
 While o'er the mountain sings the gale,
 In breathings soft as lover's tale,
 " Awake, rejoice, rejoice !"

Dews mitigate the sun's hot power,
 Smiles brighten cadent tears ;
 Thus falls thy fertilizing shower,
 Cooling and bright on thirsty flower ;
 And should the clouds of morning lower,
 The sky of evening cheers.

And man, like April, smiles and sighs
 Thro' life's eventful day ;
 What tho' the morning bring bleak skies,
 And tho' no sun a ray supplies,
 Remember this, when April dies,
 She's followed still by May.

Δ.

ETCHINGS OF EPIC POETS.

It is interesting to contrast the portraits of the great Epists with the works of which they are the index-images—the outward visible form with the manifestations of the inward visible spirit. Of Dante's person and manners Boccaccio has left us a description—"He was," he says, "a man of middle stature, and, when arrived at maturer years, distinguished by the constant gravity of his mien and sincerity of his manner. His face was long and oval, his nose aquiline, his eyes large and piercing, his jaws strong, the nether lip somewhat protruding ; he had a dusky complexion, brown hair, a beard black and curled, and bore in his aspect a perpetual expression of melancholy and thought. His costume, public and domestic, was grave and orderly. In diet he was temperate, both as regards food and drink. A lofty courtesy and civility marked his general manner." Dante's head was lofty, rather than broad—intensity, rather than amplitude, characterizes his aspect and that of his genius.

Tasso's face was regular and handsome—the forehead symmetrical, but neither remarkable for extreme height or breadth; an air of melancholy enthusiasm, an expression half of chivalrous fire, half of individual sorrow, is stamped on his countenance. Milton has little resemblance to either. We can fancy him, especially in his latter years, when engaged in the composition of "*Paradise Lost*," sitting in his gray dress in the sunshine at the door of his cottage; the head thrown back in thought, with the vast organ of imagination at either side, has a majestic air, one of remoteness from external life, aided by the dim inward expression of the blind gray eyes. Milton, like Dante, was a man of middle size. Tasso was of gigantic stature, possessing more excitability than intensity of nerve. In Dante's head, so lofty in the region of the emotions, we have an index to the motive-power which influenced his life, which found expression in his chief works, the "*Vita Nuova*" and "*Divina Commedia*." In Milton's, somewhat defective in the upper emotional region, but transcendently formed in the imaginative, the sovereign power which led to the unparalleled conceptions of hell and its spirits, the genius for sublimity, more than for beauty or love. Dante was alike pre-eminent as a delineator of the tender and terrible, but his latter pictures, unlike those of Milton, are without majesty—"Ugolino" and "Sordello," for example; and he was as little capable of conceiving the character or painting and illustrating the actions of Satan, as Milton of painting a story like "*Francesca de Rimini*." The sublimity of Tasso, except when he approaches it in describing heroic action, borders on the grotesque—as in his picture of the infernal council. Beauty was his element, but this he paints with a luxuriant southern richness—not in hues of spiritual purity, as Dante did. The greatness of Homer consists in his invention of character and incident—his truth to nature—his charm in the antique simplicity and grace of his heroic balladist genius. If the "*Iliad*" may be compared to a figured pediment in Greek bronze, glowing with life and original spirit, the "*Æneid*" may be said to resemble a pediment formed partly of marble and partly of plaster—less vigorous, more polished, but displaying, even in its finest parts, the hand of an imitator. As Virgil's characteristic is a noble elegance, and the specialite of Tasso's genius was beauty, so that of Milton's was majesty. As in the "*Paradise Lost*," the power with which its poet has painted Hell is infinitely beyond that displayed in his Paradise; so Tasso's description of the Elysian Islands, and the gardens and enchantments of Armida, is incomparably finer than his picture of battle-fields or demon councils. Milton had no model for his Hell, which, as a conception, is transcendently more imaginative than that of Dante; whereas it is easy to see that in describing Eden he had the fifteenth and sixteenth cantos of Tasso, above referred to, in his mind—just as Tasso had Ovid, whose enchantment of Circe, however, it must be confessed, has undergone, in the Italian poem, a metamorphosis far superior in variety, amplitude, and splendour.

The voyage of Rinaldo to the island-paradise of Armida resembles that of Æneas in the "*Æneid*," and, although capable of splendid treatment,

is much more geographical than poetic. Not so, however, the description of Armida's palace, with its pictures—that of the battle of Actium, for instance :—

“D'incontra è un mari; e di canuto fluto
Vedi spumanti i suoi ceruli campi,” etc.

Before you is a sea, and you behold the white waves foaming over the azure plains, in the middle a double range of navies embattled, glittering in shining armour. The waves glow with gold, and over Lucadia flames a fire of war, etc. The tenth stanza, describing the gardens, is the original of Milton's sketch of the diverse beauties of Eden :—

“Poi che laschir gli avviluppati calli
In lieto aspetto il ciel giardin s'asperse.
Acque stagnanti, mobili cristalli,
Fior varj e varie piante, erbe diverse,
Apreche collinetto, ambrose valli
Selve e spelonche in una vista offerse,” etc.

He then proceeds to describe the arbourage—the ripe fig pressing the nascent fruit round, the thick trunk, amid the verdure and foliage—the apples of golden and emerald rind, pendulous from the boughs—the serpentine paths, which, in the sunshine wind luxuriantly up the mountain, amid whose trellage the vine blossoms and grapes, green and tinged with golden fire, hang pregnant with nectar, etc. Then comes the description of the birds, their song, and the union of sweet sounds which undulate, over the enchanted space.

“Mormora l' aura, e fa le foglie e l'onde.”

The two verses of the “birds' song” are charming for their image and illustration. The bathing nymphs are voluptuously, yet chastely, described. Very picturesque also is the peacock :—

“Spiezia la pompa in mostra dell'occhiato plume.”
“Which displays to view the pomp of its eyed plumes.”

Tasso rarely, indeed, paints picturesquely, but this image, and that in which he represents the motion of the serpent, are exceptions. The cestus of Armida also, (though the idea is taken from Homer's description of that of Venus,) is a beautiful passage, and the graces and attractions of the enchantress are worked out with such fine and effective painting. Then, the approach of the shining arms and armour to the shadowy retreat of the limes, after the previous rich and luxuriant pictures, presents a fine contrast, etc. It must be confessed, however, that the introduction of the mirror into the love scene between Rinold and Armida, is an instance of false taste in the conception of the otherwise charming picture.

The invocations to the Muse, in the great epics, are very characteristic of their respective poets. In Homer, and his imitator, Virgil, they are brief

and impassioned. In Tasso, the invocation stanza, exquisitely musical, is distinguished by the brightness and beauty of the Italian genius :—

" Oh Musa tu che de caduci allori
Non chirconda la fronta in Elicona,
Ma sui nel cielo infra e beati cori
Hai de stelle immortale aurea corona ;
Tu spira al mio petto celesti ardori," etc.

While that of Milton, in the first and fourth books of "*Paradise Lost*," is finer than any in its imaginative aspiration and religious majesty.

The life of Dante may be divided into three epochs—the first 'from 1288 to 1292, which was influenced and illustrated by his love for Beatrice, whose death occurred at the end of the latter year, about which time, he being then twenty-five, he composed the "*Vita Nuova*;"—the second, from 1292 to 1307, during which, engaged in study, war, and business, he composed the "*Convito*,"—the treatise on vulgar eloquence, and other works, philosophical, literary, and theological ;—thirdly, from 1307 to 1321 (the period of his death,) during which interval of fourteen years, he was occupied in the composition of the "*Divine Comedy*." In the "*Vita Nuova*," which is the history of his love for Beatrice, he combined all the verses he had written to her, and added thereto an historical, philosophical, literary, and analytical commentary. While, however, the prose portion abounds with many passages of description, incidental and emotional, infused with a fine poetic spirit, it must be confessed that Dante, in the throngs of amatory verses referred to, frequently displays taste to the last degree *bizarre*, inelegant, and pedantic ; and, with the exception of one beautiful sonnet, there is hardly a passage in the collection worthy of his genius. Passing over the philosophical and theological treatise, on which, as Petrarch did on his, Dante set so high a value, and which are now only important as illustrating the learning and tendency of the epoch, we come to the work on which his immortality is founded.

The origin, composition, and object of the "*Divine Comedy*" has long exercised the ingenuity of critics and commentators, but it is only of late that the researches of Italian writers have enabled us to attain correct views on this interesting literary problem. In the first place, it is an error to suppose that the idea of the "*Commedà*,"—that of a visionary journey through the three regions of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise,—was an original conception of Dante. Such visions were, indeed, among the commonest compositions of the middle ages. The most ancient which has been conserved is that "*Gregory of Tours*," written in 571, between which and Dante's "*Inferno*" a strong analogy exists. Among other works of the same description may be mentioned, "*The Vision of Guettin*," a monk of the Abbey of Angier, in Sonabel, composed in 824 ; "*An Imaginary Voyage to the Invisible World*," written by another monk, named Roger, in the succeeding age, in which a young girl of Rheims is described as being transported in a vision to Paradise ; while in the works of Mathew Paris, on several such occasions, collected by him in 1196, may be found among

them, "The Voyage of St. Paul to Hell," &c. In a word, the existence of such works demonstrate that, as regards the conduct of the "Divine Comedy," Dante drew his conception wholly from preceding writers. Dante began the "Comedià" in his twenty-fourth year, (1289,) as appears from a letter of Frere Hilaire, lately found in the ancient Abbey of Coroo. This was the year in which he commenced the "Vita Nuova," shortly after Beatrice died, and as he had written the actual history of his passion in the latter, the object he set before him in the "Comedià" was to compose a poem on the supernatural world, in which she should play a great part. The above-mentioned year also was memorable for other circumstances, while it was that year in which Dante had taken part in the battle of Campaldino, it was also signalized by the tragical adventures of Francesca, of Rimini, and by the imprisonment and death of Ugolino and her children, at Pisa. The death of his mistress, in connection with these latter events, produced a powerful effect on Dante, who forthwith began to compose his great poem, with the object above referred to. He appears to have composed a few cantos, among them, doubtless, the fifth and thirty-third, in which the stories of Francesca and Ugolino,—perhaps, the finest in the work, are narrated, and in which he thus vividly embodied the tragedy of contemporary life. He seems then to have thrown by the poem until 1307, being in the interval prevented from continuing it by the well-known incidents of his stormy and melancholy career. When, at the latter epoch, Dante resumed the "Comedià," his object was to render it a "life poem," of which the leading idea should be the apotheosis of his love for Beatrice, and which he also designed to render instrumental in expressing the entire classical and theological knowledge of his age. In the fourteenth century, deeply infused with the spirit of Christianity, as it was, the traditions of Roman paganism were still vital, and hence we find in his poem so strange and incongruous an intermixture of both. Thus, while utilizing, he has given a new form to the mythology of antiquity; for instance, in the third canto of the "Inferno," he has represented the Greek god Charon, as a demon; he is not the unimpassioned spirit of Hades, represented by Homer and Virgil, but the *dimonio Caron*, with the *occhi di fiamme ruote*, and *parole crude*, who, possessed with destructive rage, hurries the damned across the livid lake to their doom. Again, in Virgil, Acheron is a real—in Dante, a mysterious river. As we descend into the circles of the "Inferno," we meet with many other mythologic figures and personages. Minos in the 2nd, Cerberus in the 3rd, and Pluto in the 4th cantos of the poem, which, while thus a true reflection of the Pagan recollections, is still more so of Christian doctrines. Beatrice, whose power is recognised throughout the "Comedià," appears in the "Inferno" conversing with Virgil on the subject of Christian virtues, and expounding the theologic ideas of the time; from the first she is made to appear the special Providence of the poet, and it is her spirit which gives the charm to the various developments of the work. While the cares and sufferings of Dante's life have given a ferocity and intensity to his revengeful theology, as manifested in his exhaustless inventions of punishments, it is the love of

Beatrice which animates his soul with heavenly inspiration, and which finally exalts it to Paradise.

Dante's adherence to theology appears to have restricted his conception of a poetic hell; his "Inferno" is a vast abyss of descending circles, and differs from that of Milton, as depth from amplitude. In the latter, the antipodes of infinity are endless; in Dante limited, except in depth and height. The hell of the English poet is, indeed, far more imaginative than that of the Italian in almost every respect, and though the pictures of the latter are wonderfully intense, they occasionally suffer from the prosaic definition, and are not unfrequently more grotesque than sublime. Take the picture of Charon, for instance, and contrast it with Milton's Death;—the one is a visible fury, the other an unsubstantial terror. Nothing, indeed, can be finer in its poetic vagueness than the latter picture, though it is injured by the line "Fierce as ten furies":—

"The other shape,
If shape it might be called, that shape had none
Distinguishable in muscular joint or limb,
If substance might be called, that shadow seemed,
For each seemed either. Black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
And shook a dreadful dart, what seemed its head,
The image of a kingly crown had on."

In Dante, nothing can be more primeval than the picture of the early giants, buried to the waste in the frozen sea, who cry out after Dante and his guide, in the unceasing words of a lost tongue.

Between the comparisons and images of Dante and Milton a wide difference is observable. In sublime writing the illustration should be greater than the thing illustrated, in order, thus, to elevate the conception and increase the effect; and though, from the greatness of his theme, the tremendous powers of the spirits he depicts, their adventures and wars, Milton could hardly find any objects of comparison in the external universe to fulfil the above conditions, he has, nevertheless, selected the mightiest he could find. The banner of hell shines like a meteor streaming on the wind. Satan's shield is compared to the sphere of the moon magnified by the telescope; the form of the ruined archangel to the horizontal misty sun shorn of its beams; his myrmydons to a forest of blasted oaks; his appearance flying along the fiery concave of hell to a fleet descried at sea; in his combat with Death he stands incensed with indignation, and burning like a comet that fires the arctic sky,—hell grows dark in the frown of the mighty combatants. In the threatened contest with Gabriel, in the garden of Eden, we are told, on the other side, Satan, alarmed, collecting all his might dilated stood, like Teneriffe or Atlas, unmoved. His stature reached the sky, and on his crest sat horror plumed. In the battle in heaven, when struck down by the sword of Michael, his immense figure, upstayed by his massy spear, is compared to a mountain pushed by an earthquake from its seat, "half sunk with all its pines!" In another contest with Michael, the unapproachable power of the two warrior angels

approaching can only be compared to two planets rushing on with malign aspect, and speaks of the powerful attraction of Satan's spiritual beauty on the hosts of heaven—we are told, "his countenance, as the morning star that guides the starry flock, allured them, drawing after him a third part of the celestial host," &c. In a word, the illustrative images of Milton are the mightiest in poetry, as his style is the most concentrated, majestic, and sublime; and the poets who have sought to imitate his manner may be compared to men on stilts attempting to emulate the strength and deportment of a primeval giant.

On the other hand, Dante's images, though singularly exact and accurate, are generally below the subject they are intended to exemplify, and far less imaginative than those of Milton. The giants, half sunk in the frozen sea are compared to towers; of Satan's stature we are told that it was as lofty as the dome of St. Peter's at Rome; and, like Tasso, Dante, in depicting the archangel of hell, has displayed a lamentable want of poetic taste and conception, by endowing him with the traditional horns and tail of vulgar fancy. All his comparisons, indeed, tend to render the objects with which they are contrasted, visible, but they do not exalt the fancy as regards any of them. He is much more poetically successful in those designed to illustrate subjects or objects of beauty, than those of terror or power; and among the latter may be mentioned the exquisite image in the "Purgatorio," where Dante and Virgil, turning from a mountain path, come suddenly on a group of purified spirits; when their shadows fall on the latter, rendering them conscious of their mortal presence, the quiet wonder manifested in their aspect, as they regard them, is compared to the look of surprise which a flock of snowy sheep evince when, at the sound of a casual footstep, they raise their heads from the pasturage.

Dante's picturesque faculty partakes of the intensity which characterizes his genius, whether dealing with thought, sentiment, or description. How striking, for example, is the first glimpse we obtain of the city of Pluto, with its red-hot domes burning sullenly against the black horizon of Pandemonium? Or what can be more paralysing in its imaginative effect than the account of Dante and Virgil passing by the tower of the Furies, when the latter crying out to bring up one of the Gorgon's head and turn them into stone, Virgil says, "walk aside and cover your face, for if it should even be seen by the Gorgon's eyes, we might despair of returning to the earth." The description of the gate of hell, in the third canto of the "Inferno," is a famous passage. Milton, depicting the portal of Pandemonium, says—

"Thrice threefold the gates, threefold were brass,
Three iron, and three of adamantine rock
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed."

The effect of this description, which is simply objective, is indeed wonderfully increased by the portraiture of the guardians of the gates, Sin and Death. In Dante, however, the personality given to the gates of

bell by the inscription, is, perhaps, still more imaginatively awesome. He makes the gate itself speak as it were—

“Through me you pass to the city of woe:
Through me you pass to eternal sorrow:
Through me you pass to the people of perdition:
Justice and highest fate have formed me,
I am the work of divine power,
Of consummate wisdom and primeval love;
Before me no created thing existed,
Save things eternal, and eternally I endure.—
Abandon all hope, ye who enter here.”

All Dante's pictures, as we have said, are defined, intense, awe-inspiring, but though he realizes everything to the sight, his imagination fails to convey the impression of vastness and shadowy unsubstantiality, like that of Milton—as in his description of the throne of Chaos, whose dark pavilion spread wide on the wasteful deep:—

“With him enthroned
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign, and by them stood
Orcas and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demi-gorgon.”

How wonderfully impressive is this latter touch, respecting this Power of the dark, confused, wasteful deep—known only as a *name*!

In the “Inferno” pictures Dante excels in what may be called the intense prosaic sublime, Milton in the majestic poetic, but the former excels the latter as much when he paints from the sensibilities as the latter the former when he paints from the imagination. Strength and brevity is the characteristic of the style of the “Comedià,” fire, amplitude, elevation, of “Paradise Lost.” Dante's manner of concentrating his touches of description and thought in single lines, which is very peculiar, dramatic, and forcible, shews that his talent was that of a painter rather than musician, and it is only the form of verse he adopted the *terza rima*, whose flowing, recurrent harmony covers the abruptness of his style. Light travels further than sound; and the far-seeing genius of Dante regarded the idea as primary to the music. His first object ever is to fix the thought in the fewest and most striking words; and no writer, not even Tacitus, is a better study for any writer who wishes to preserve his style from diffuseness. Of his powers of concentrated diction, the third canto of the “Inferno” and fifth of the “Purgatorio” are, perhaps, the most signal examples. We may add, however, that the diction of Milton, in his finest passages, is, with a couple of exceptions, far more harmoniously picturesque and poetic in its imaginative language, than that of Dante. As a describer of seasons and scenery, the Italian poet exhibits more sensibility and spiritual beauty than his English compeer. To perceive the difference between them in this respect, one may compare Milton's lines on Evening, in the fourth canto “of Paradise Lost,” commencing, “Now came still Evening on,

and twilight gray," &c., with the opening of the eighth canto of the "Purgatorio;" and the beginning of the fifth of "Paradise Lost."

"Now Morn her rosy steps in the eastern clime
Advancing sowed the earth with orient pearl."

With Dante's glimpse of Morning, in the 1st canto of the "Purgatorio," where we see "the sweet saffron hue of the east delighting the vision as it bathes the pure-aired firmament of the fifteenth circle, through which the beauteous planet which lovers adore, makes all the orient smile. Dante, indeed, always describes scenery in relation to the feelings and soul, not objectively only; and it is in this method of allying our associations with the objects represented that his superior excellence, as a painter of externals, depends. He does not merely reflect the various beauties of nature in his verse, but gives them a higher interest by connecting each of their phrases with our sensibilities. Milton's passages of beauty, however, though defective in their higher ideal aspect, are true to nature, richly coloured, and enshrined in verse whose every line increases the effect up to the final harmonious climax:—

"Ac qualis flatu placidum mare matituno
Horrificans Zephyrus proclivas incidat undas
Aurora exoriente, vagi sub lumina solis:
Quæ tarde primum clementi flamine pulsæ
Procedunt, leni et resonant plangori cachinni;
Post, vento crescente, magis magis increbrescent
Purpureaque procul nantes a luce refulgent."

Taking a limited range, in the highest domains of ancient and modern literature—what are the best passages in epic, dramatic, and descriptive poetry? To begin with Homer, there is the picture of the Greek encampment, at the end of the seventh book of the *Iliad*, the battle in which Menelaus and Paris take a part; the parting of Hector and Andromache; the combat between Hector and Achilles, and its sequel—these and a few others are the most prominent; through Homer's narrative vigour is sustained throughout. In Virgil, the story of Orpheus in the fourth *Georgic*, the storm in the first *Æneid*, the scenes in which Dido appears in the fourth, the account of the Trojan games in the fifth, and the episode of Nisus and Euryalus, and of Camilla. In Dante the passages above referred to, including the third, fifth, twenty-third, and twenty-fourth cantos of the *Inferno*, the sixth and four last of the *Purgatorio*. In Tasso, the fifteenth and sixteenth cantos, the combat between Tankred and Clorinda in the twelfth,—with many shorter passages, such as the meditation over Carthage—

Giace l'alta Carthago appena i segni
Dell'alte sue ruine il lido serba,
Muojono li citta, muojono i regne, etc., etc.

And among others the fine stanza, in which he prophesies the discoveries of Columbus—

E la terra missuri, immense mole
 Vittorioso ed emulo del sole.
 Ambitioning round earth's great orb to run,
 And emulate victoriously the sun.

There is much beauty also in the episode of "Olinda and Safira," though, generally speaking, he is far surpassed by Ariosto in the dramatic nature of his scenes, as well as his vigour of description—*vide* the death of Medora, by the hands of Argante, the storm, etc., in the "Orlando." Before alluding to Milton, we may indicate the first soliloquy in the "Prometheus," and the first scene in the "Eumenides" of Æschylus, as full of primeval grandeur. Carlyle, indeed, will characterize the originator of the dramatic poetry of Greece as "a gigantic man, not entirely civilized, whose poetry is as if the rocks of the sea had begun to speak, and tell us what they had been thinking of from eternity." In Milton, the two first books of "Paradise Lost" are the *ne plus ultra* of sublime painting. Among his other famous passages are the account of the battle of the angels in heaven, (there are great lines in the sketch of Creation too, but altogether this part of the poem is inferior,) the lady's reply to Comus, in the Mask, also is a passage hardly inferior to any speech in Shakspeare. But, *repere vestigia* for a moment—in Lucretius, the description of chaos, of religion, of the plague at Athens, of love, and philosophy are far more natural and vigorous than any in Virgil; while the Atys of Catulus and two of the pictures in his Peleus and Thetis, are unrivalled for wild grandeur, passion, and splendour in Latin poetry. In Lucan, also, there are great passages, among the best of them the description of the Marseilles wood, from which Tasso took his account of the enchanted forest, which, however, is far inferior to that of the Latin poet. In Ovid, whose luxuriant fancy runs riot, almost the only poem distinguished by epical imagination is the combat of Ajax and Ulyses for the armour of Achilles.

Spencer abounds with beautiful passages, and in beauty occasionally rivals Tasso, but, then, he describes rather than paints. Passing over Marlow, in whose plays there are a couple of great scenes and much great poetry, and the inferior Elizabethian dramatists—laboriously fanciful Johnson, gloomy Webster, graceful Massinger, scarce any of whom have produced a scene equal to that in the Hieronimo of an anonymous playwright of the age—we come to Shakspeare. As he was always equal to his subject, it is difficult to make a selection from the dramatic world of the greatest of poets. Among passages and scenes of beauty, however, may be mentioned Iachimo's description of the sleeping Imogene, the love scenes in "Romeo and Juliet," and "Troilus and Cressida" and the "Tempest," and, for power, the murder scene in "Macbeth" and its soliloquies, the storm scene in "Lear," the soliloquies in "Hamlet" and "Timon," the scenes between "Iago and Othello," the description of the "Night before Agincourt," of "Henry's army," of "the Dauphin's horse," etc., etc. We need scarcely add that Antony's speech, in "Julius Cæsar," is the most perfect little oration in the world, or that that of Northumberland, on hearing of Percy's death, is unrivalled in its epic passion. But Shakspeare's poetic universe is too vast,

- and too full of power and beauty, more than to glance at. Among the later epic poets, we may add, in conclusion, that the only good passage in Camoën's age is the description of the Stormy Phantom Spirit of the Cape, and the best in the "Henriad" is that in which the passions which guard the gate of Hell are succinctly characterized.

THE STORY OF SIBYLLE.

WHEN a writer of the present day, with a fine disdain for the prevailing taste in literature, produces a work of fiction, devoid of the usual attractions, the marvellous, the murderous, the ingeniously entangled, and yet contrives thoroughly to engage attention, and to awaken profound interest in a heroine of romance, whose life was of so even a tenor, that scarcely an adventure varied its course, save what took the form and import of such, from—

"The passion and the life, whose fountains are within,"

he at once asserts and establishes a claim to a very high order of talent. M. Octave Feuillet, who, as our readers may probably remember, was elected member of the Académie Française, not many months since, has recently published a very note-worthy book, entitled *Histoire de Sibylle*, the characteristics of which are a quite simple uninvolved plot, a truly artistic sketching of character and incident, profound feeling of the under currents, which give a marked direction to the moral and intellectual life of the time, and a style at once terse and elegant.

No translation of this story into English has been announced. Possibly, like many another gem "of purest ray," it may escape notice amidst the glitter of "most prevailing tinsel." Neither have monthly or quarterly critics busied themselves introducing this remarkable work of a remarkable man to English readers, though it certainly would be candid and useful to let our insular world know, from time to time, that French literature is not invariably a highly-seasoned compound of what is free in doctrine, loose in morals, and reprehensible in taste. We have the less hesitation in devoting some pages to M. Octave Feuillet's charming story, since it will be new to all, save the very few who are habitually read up to the day in Continental literature. The centre of attraction throughout is Mdlle. Sibylle de Férias; and, leaving most of the other personages in shadowy outline, we will content ourselves with giving a sketch of that enchanting figure, using, as it may suit, the words of the narrative.

The story begins on a lovely autumn evening, when the infant Sibylle, in the arms of her nurse, and attended by the liveried servants of a noble house, followed by a crowd of country folks, all interest and admiration, is carried forth in her baptismal robes, from the church which crowns the sum-

mit of a cliff, rising abruptly from the ocean waters that beat upon the coast of Normandy. When the little procession has passed through the church-yard, a lady and gentleman, both tall and of strikingly elegant appearance, descend the steps of the porch, and approaching two white marble slabs, which have been newly laid side by side, kneel down together, in silence, on the soft sod. The prayer of sorrow and resignation over, and a few words of consolation whispered by the Curé, who had followed them from the church, the venerable pair step into the carriage in which the little orphan is nestled; and thus the sole representatives of the ancient race are, as the night falls, rolled noiselessly through the sombre avenue which leads to the Château de Férias. The Marquis and M^{de}. de Férias had lost, a short time before their daughter-in-law, Julia de Vergnes; and their only son Count Christain, unable to bear the overwhelming shock of his wife's death, had sunk, not long after, beneath the weight of that great distress; a not uncommon result, it is remarked, of sharp trial and unusual sorrow in this age of sickly sensibility and feeble faith. M. and M^{de}. de Férias had borne up through all, sustained by the firmness of their faith, their tender mutual affection, and the consciousness of the new duty they were called upon to discharge, in regard to their little grandchild, the legacy, as it were, of the white tombs in the church-yard.

A love at once tender and scrupulous, watched over that precious young life, which, even in the dawn gave promise, to careful eyes, of a memorable day. The good old grand-parents would want, it was evident, all the wisdom of their experience, and the quick instincts of their rich affections, to direct them in their task. A pretty little one was Sibylle de Férias, with great blue eyes, habitually serene and serious, but capable of darkening and flashing in moments of passion and emotion. Sometimes, a mere infant in the nurse's arms, she would appear to fix her fancy on what was neither tangible nor attainable, longing, as far as those about could guess, to grasp a meteor in her tiny hand, and have a star out of heaven for a plaything; exciting uneasy misgivings in the mind of the watchers, with regard to such precocious signs of unreasonable desire and obstinacy of will. The use of speech and increase of years seemed only to afford other means of expressing the impetuous volition of her nature. One day, the Marquis found his grandchild in violent altercation with her nurse, the fancy having seized her to make the circuit of the pond on the back of a swan which was sailing majestically on its placid waters! M^{de}. de Férias was seriously troubled by such outbursts as these, and would sometimes say she was greatly afraid there was an evil spirit in this angel of theirs. But the wise old Marquis would not by any means allow such a conclusion. The child, he insisted, only desired with extreme intensity whatever she set her mind on; all the better, surely, if her impulses were good. "The faculties we receive from heaven," he would say, "are two-edged swords, capable of being wielded for good or evil; the more definite and powerful the faculties, the nobler the gift; the all-important matter being, to regulate and direct them. This, Sibylle must do for herself, when reason and age will enable her to use her moral freedom in the task; but, meanwhile, they must

do it for her, not seeking to destroy that precious instrument, that noble faculty, that invincible weapon in the battle of life, a strong will, but with gentleness and courage guiding the impetuous aspirations into the paths of the true, the reasonable, and the possible."

These reflections were not made just at the moment that the child had worked herself into a passion, because she would not be suffered to ride on the swan; but that incident afforded an opportunity of administering a practical lesson on the text. A few more such scenes and a few more such lessons, and Sibylle learned to understand that the nature of things, and her grandfather's superior wisdom, should and must in many cases arrest the impetuosity of her desires. The day came at last, when the Marquis had only to say:—"Sibylle, my dear, do you want to get on the swan's back?" and forthwith, a rising storm was quelled. Nothing, in fact, remained after a while, of the tyrannous instincts which had mastered her, but an ardent and persevering pursuit of legitimate aspirations.

The discipline of the strong hand and the loving heart, was far from saddening the spring-time for Sibylle, or detracting from the reverential and warm affection she felt for her grand-parents. Indeed, her sensitive, serious, and enthusiastic nature, was singularly impressed by the simple dignity, cultivated refinement, and truly Christian character of the old people. Prettily sketched are the scenes of daily life at the Château de Férias, in the midst of which she grew to girlhood; the gathering of the household and workmen for evening prayer, the Marquis in the midst, adding to the accustomed form some words of familiar instruction, suited to their simple capacity; the paying of the labourers in the summer evenings, the stately old people sitting under a grove of pines in the park, the child in the midst, the workmen defiling through the fields in motley troops, their implements dangling in their hands, or swung across their shoulders, and coming up to the paling, one by one, to answer a kindly word of inquiry, and receive their week's wages, and oftentimes something over and above, from the hands of the delighted child. Neither was the beauty of the outer world without its influence. The wild woods surrounding the Château, from the high grounds of which was caught a glimpse of the—

"Far off shining of the silvery sea."

and the fairy-like seclusions of the deep ravines were haunted by Sibylle, till the love of the beautiful, the joyousness of life in nature, the poetic feeling, and the spiritual sense became developed wonderfully and harmoniously.

By-and-bye, when studies of a more definite order required to be entered on, the vivid intelligence of the child expanded satisfactorily also on that side. The Curé was called in to aid M^{me}. de Férias, who, in the task of instructing her grandchild, not seldom "toiled after her in vain," and reliable friends in Paris being entrusted with the commission, a governess was procured, to help still further on the education of M^{lle}. Sibylle. A strange figure, by the way, is this angular Miss O'Neill, an Irishwoman, of

the race of Fergus the Red, a great proficient in the art of playing on the Irish Harp, and much given to painting in water-colours, especially lake scenery by moonlight. A Protestant, too, as the good souls discovered, to their inexpressible consternation, yet, withal, so true, and wise, and gentle, that one and all, including M. le Curé, were soon satisfied she was fit to be the instructor and friend of their exceedingly precious charge. Things went on smoothly enough, until the time arrived for Mdlle. Sibylle to make her first communion. She had been receiving a special course of instruction from the Curé himself, but strange scruples had somehow gained possession of her anxiously questioning mind, a too ideal view of the ordinary Christian life, and the measuring of others by too lofty a standard, usurped the place of Christian docility and reasonable charity, and to the exceeding-grief of her grand-parents, the good priest, and right-minded Miss O'Neill, she refused to comply with the solemn rite. How a happy change was effected in the young girl's mind, and sunshine flooded the gloom, is admirably described in a chapter, containing a fine picture of the wreck of a fishing-boat, on the rocks beneath the cliff crowned by the little church, the scenes of terror and suspense on land, the Curé's heroic devotion, the fall of night, and the despair of the watchers by the storm-lashed shore.

Pure felicity was the characteristic of the few years which followed. The somewhat harsh traits which had been at an early period observable in Sibylle's character became insensibly softened as she grew to womanhood, while in the spiritual order a truer and a finer principle lived and worked, interfusing with an infinite grace her air and bearing. Her grandfather had often noticed, not without anxiety, a strange tendency to spring, so to speak, at one bound, to the highest spiritual idea, totally neglectful of the intermediate steps. Like most of her age, she was in this sphere of thought impetuous and enthusiastic, not patient and tender; mastered by the grand, simple idea of the Supreme Being, but untouched by the Gospel narrative, preferring the Old Testament to the New—revelling in the heroic deeds of martyrs, but understanding little of the daily service of the Christian heart; yielding belief in a somewhat dim way to the mystery of redemption, as an article of faith, but altogether missing the divine meaning of the mystery, and remaining unmoved by its human side. For not, as the writer says, until the first breath of human passion sweeps through the heart, is the way made ready for the Saviour to enter—as a God, but likewise as a friend. This point had now been reached, and Sibylle, delighted in her conversations with the Curé and Miss O'Neill, who, we should have mentioned, entered the Church sometime before, to dwell upon the touching episodes in the history of that sinless existence, considering with a wondering admiration the union of divine impassibility and human tenderness, which so mysteriously characterise the Man-God. Many a time, in such sweet communings, would Sibylle prolong the evening walk far into the woods, till the silvery starlight shone through the sombre foliage; or sit delightedly beside the old Curé, on the heathery summit of the cliff, looking vaguely out to the horizon in a blaze of sunset glory.

But it must not be supposed that Mdlle. de Férias' experience was con-

fined to intercourse with the personages we have referred to. The country neighbourhood afforded some society. Sibylle had companions, if not friends, of her own age, and even projects of marriage had been entertained with families of suitable condition. Finally, however, M. and Mme. de Férias gave up the hope of finding a desirable alliance for their granddaughter in their own immediate neighbourhood, and resolved, according to an original family arrangement, to confide Sibylle to the care of her maternal grandparents, the Count and Mme. de Vergnes; for, in their elegant salon, and amidst their Paris circle, a desirable aspirant would be most likely to present himself. It was a sad parting to all, but the sacrifice was made, and Mdlle. de Férias introduced into the new world of Paris life. The first bird's-eye view did not quite come up to her expectation. The daily routine of the fashionable world proved insipid enough, and she missed the repose of home life, which was altogether unknown in the Hôtel de Vergnes. Nevertheless, she had her compensations. Amidst the society of some few salons, in the course of her morning excursions with Miss O'Neill, in the museums, theatres, and even in walking through the streets, she experienced that vivid sense of enjoyment, which the ceaseless activity, constantly varying display, and universally infused electricity of intellectual life, are sure to impart to a naturally quick and happily cultivated mind. She breathed freely and joyously in the intellectual atmosphere which envelopes Paris, and forms its special and incomparable charm. But she acknowledged to her dear old grandfather, M. de Férias, that her existence at this time was a continual alternation between a state of the liveliest interest and the reaction of profound *ennui*. She was not long in discovering that, of all places in the world, Paris affords the greatest variety of resources to the mind, but the very fewest helps to the soul. The intellectual wants are fully satisfied, but the cravings of the spiritual nature are left unsatisfied; and she knew well how insufficient for the happiness of a human being the very highest enjoyments of the intellect are. "If I am allowed any control over my future destiny," she said, "I shall be only a bird of passage in Paris. The tumultuous rush, never-ending distraction of this sort of life, the people constantly on tip-toe, ever on the wing, gay without intermission, frenzied with excitement, stun and bewilder me. I strive in vain to gain possession of my real self. When I came here I fancied I had dropped into the midst of a carnival that would soon come to a termination; but in this I was mistaken, for I find it the essence and foundation of existence in Paris. All these people come and go, rush hither and thither, laugh the day through, and die off in the twinkling of an eye. The idea of any one dying in Paris seems quite unnatural. So artificial is the whole condition of society, that such a fact as death shocks by its very reality, like an accident at a feast. It is just the one solitary fact which cannot be got rid of, there is no possibility of evading it. Every other reality, it appears to me, is totally ignored. Luxury and superfluity, ornament and show, are the sole aim and end of all. There are sweetmeats to no end, but I find a terrible scarcity of common food. Ah, good God! give me, I beseech thee, my portion of the inestimable daily bread, and let me have some one who will eat it with me slowly

and gratefully, bit by bit, near my own true home, and close, quite close to my dear, good grandfather!"

The family circle and the conjugal relations of the Hôtel de Vergnes exhibited quite a different state of things from what Sibylle had been used to, and when the experience was thrust upon her, that what came immediately under her own observation was not an exceptional case, but merely one example among many, her views of life began to assume a very positive form. That she should marry was a matter of course, appearing to her serious, well-disciplined mind, almost as a great law of moral life, which should be fulfilled at the proper time; while the tenderness of her woman's nature disposed her to look forward to a happy union, as the crowning of her life and the security of her peace. But it was becoming painfully apparent that the chances were rather against her meeting, in that society, one to whom she could safely entrust her happiness or her peace. She was resolved, at any rate, to depend in such a grave matter upon her own judgment, and to call in the aid of sound reason, to save her from the surprise of passion, and guide her in a fitting choice. The Count de Vergnes, who took a whimsical pleasure in ridiculing the young gentlemen he paraded before his granddaughter as sniters, more or less eligible, nevertheless reproached her occasionally with what he considered her absurd pretensions. "Do you really know," he would say to her, "what it is you have set your heart on? My dear child, you want a young gentleman at once handsome, rich, and of noble parentage, a painter, a musician, and a good horseman—a decidedly intellectual person, and a particularly good Christian! Well, you may look through the world as you will, but it is my opinion that no such specimen of humanity exists!" "Oh, no, I assure you, no," Sibylle would reply, "I don't require anything of the kind, I only want some one I can love; that's all, indeed!"

Both her reason and her heart revolted at the idea of contracting one of those unions, the inevitable consequence of which seemed to be, after a longer or a shorter period, a sort of mutual restraint, amical separation, and moral divorce. The conclusion had been forced on her, that the want of the one imperishable tie, the religious bond, was the true cause of this unhappy condition. People married a title, a fortune, a handsome face, or because it was the custom to do so, and an arrangement suitable to their position; the natural consequences followed. But Mdlle. de Férias was resolved that she should not be the temporary mistress of her husband, but his faithful and cherished companion through life, and, as she hoped, throughout eternity also. Lesser love than this would have outraged her pride, and in the end have broken her heart. She knew that marriage, to produce its true fruits, must have its roots not only in the hearts that are bound together, but likewise in the religion which has instituted and blessed it. Religious feeling, a common faith, the unity of noble aspirations, and everlasting hopes, can alone impart to our frail human affections something of the solidity and permanence of divine love. And, therefore, as Mdlle. de Férias had learnt to model her conduct according to principles which she believed just and true, she made up her mind never to marry any man

who did not seriously share her faith. The standard was a high one, not easily reached at the present day, when the life-blood of society is so universally infected with the poison of materialism and infidelity. The difficulty was greatly increased in this case, for Mdlle. de Férias would have required in her husband similarity of tastes, a high order of mind, and, although it might not easily be found, a stronger character than her own. Unfortunately, she did not fail to observe that, in the society about her, men who might be recommended for unexceptionable morals and sincere piety, were often contemptible enough in character and attainments; while those who were really distinguished and attractive, were just as frequently spoken of as decided free thinkers and notorious free livers.

At last comes upon the scene Count Raoul de Chalys, in whom many of the qualities which M. de Vergnes believed to be irreconcilable appeared to be united. His intellect was highly cultivated, his tastes were artistic, he had a handsome face, and a manly bearing. Rank and reputation were not wanting, and he possessed that enthusiastic temperament and fine strain of poetic feeling which make a man well nigh irresistible to such a woman as Mdlle. de Férias. Years before, a little adventure in the woods of Férias had exalted Raoul into a hero of romance in the childish imagination of Sibylle, and had left a subtle impression on the poetic fancy of the Count, so that when they met in Paris, each was predisposed to feel more rapidly the attraction which sooner or later must inevitably have drawn very close these two rarely-gifted natures. We must not, however, stop to mark the progress of events. Friends on either side were delighted at the prospect of a union so very desirable. In their social position, difficulties of the ordinary kind, or long delays, were not likely to occur, and matters seemed almost hurrying to a conclusion. Meanwhile, Sibylle was not so absorbed in her affection and admiration for her lover as to forget her principles. Misgivings crossed her mind from time to time that Count Raoul's sentiments were not exactly so orthodox as might be desired. Her natural guardians overlooked the question completely, and particular inquiry on the subject she rather dreaded. She may have had a secret dread of knowing the whole truth, or possibly she comforted herself with the idea that the religious sentiment could not be, in any essential degree, wanting in a nature so enthusiastic and generous as his. She had made up her mind, however, to seek an explanation, without further delay, from the Count himself, when, in the course of an after-dinner conversation, at the house of a mutual friend, the Count being challenged to the confession by M. Gandrax, his bosom friend, and a dauntless unbeliever, publicly avowed himself an Atheist, or, in other words, announced that he was "not so happy as to believe in a God!"

Mdlle. de Férias lost consciousness on hearing those words, and was carried out of the room insensible. The lofty edifice of her hopes and happiness crumbled in an instant. No murmur escaped her, but when safe at home with her friends, she told them in the fewest possible words that it would be contrary to her principles to marry a man devoid of religious faith and moral principles; begged they would not speak any more of a

marriage which she allowed would have suited her perfectly in every other respect, and declared her intention of returning immediately to her old home at Férias. "You have lost all by your impiety," said the Duchess de Suaves to Count Raoul, when Sibylle had left the house. "She leaves to-morrow for Férias; you will see her no more." And then regretting the bitterness and anger with which she had expressed herself, struck by the terrible change which came over his face, "My dear friend," she added, "can you not repair what you have done? A single word would be sufficient." "A falsehood, do you mean?" said he, with a dark fire in his eye, "never!"

Perhaps, what Sibylle found it hardest to bear was the full consciousness that her strong will, so used to triumph, now, for the first time, trembled beneath the shock of real passion, and that the man whom her faith, her reason, and her pride, alike repudiated, remained master of her heart in spite of all. The first days of her return to Férias were very trying. Her changed appearance, her absent manner, her complete indifference filled the old people with anxiety. By degrees, however, the soothing solitude, the grand and varied scenery, the beautiful family life charmed away the sharpness of the pain. The God to whom she had been faithful did not forsake her in her extremity. Great faith does not exclude great sorrow, but it is a shield against despair. Mdlle. de Férias did not deceive herself, she knew very well she was not likely to meet on her path through life another man who could be to her what this man had been. Without overlooking the Count's shortcomings, she rendered full justice to his great gifts, his breadth of intellect, his rare personal power of attraction; he had, indeed, completely won her. In renouncing Raoul she was well aware it was her woman's destiny she was renouncing, and it required her ardent faith, her redoubled piety, her eternal hopes, the God of heaven himself, to fill up the infinite void which suddenly opened before her path in life. It was not more than was required, but it sufficed; and day after day less bitter tears fell, her soul grew strong and calm, and, in moments full of peace, almost of happiness, she felt that her prayers were heard, and her sacrifice accepted.

Neither were employments wanting, as the good Curé knew, and the poor, far and near, who were ministered to by that impersonation of radiant beauty and majestic grace. The good grandfather's purse was ever open to whatever call Sibylle might choose to make. Even when she set her heart on having a new organ for the church, and determined to transfigure the little edifice into a vestibule of heaven, by means of painted windows, carvings in wood, ornamental roof, and frescoed walls, nothing was refused. Far more than Sibylle knew turned on this fancy for mural decoration. The Duchess de Suaves, who has hitherto had much to do in the story, though we have not tarried on the way to note her good offices, was requested to find in Paris a properly qualified artist. She referred the matter to Count Raoul, into whose brain the extraordinary idea entered of undertaking the task himself. In fine, after such delay as the requisite preparations necessitated, the Count arrived at Férias, was received by the Curé in his

character of artist, and hospitably established at his house. The walls of the church had been prepared, and scaffolding erected in the nave, so there was no delay in commencing the work. The Curé was enchanted with the plan sketched out by the artist, and though very far from suspecting the rank and history of the rather distinguished young gentleman who had received the commission, he contrived, by many an ingenious stratagem, to prevent Mdlle. de Férias coming over to the village until the work had been somewhat advanced. However, one day, as the artist was finishing a charming sketch of the Adoration of the Magi, he suddenly felt the ladder which rested against the scaffolding yield to a light foot; he heard the rustle of a lady's garments, and in a moment knew that Sibylle was close beside him on the platform. The beauty of the design struck her with astonishment. But, next moment, recognising Count Raoul, the blood rushed to her face, and she stretched forth her hand in search of support. Then, suddenly growing pale as marble, her blue eyes flashed upon the Count in all the intensity of offended pride and supreme indignation. Without uttering a word she descended the platform and rapidly quitted the church. On the threshold she met the Curé. "My dear young lady, what is the matter?" he cried, in utter astonishment. The bitter resentment which this audacious attempt to disturb her peace and insult her dignity excited in her mind, imparted an almost fierce expression of anger and haughtiness to the words she uttered with premeditated distinctness. "Ah, my dear Curé," said she, "we have been wretchedly deceived! you must send away this man immediately. He is no painter—or rather he is the last of painters. His presence contaminates your church! Come away."

The Count had lost not a single word. His face flushed to crimson, and his heart sank within him. The feeling which had inspired his romantic enterprise seemed misconstrued with odious severity. Then follows a scene with the Curé, and an interview with the Marquis de Férias. Suffice it to say, that the Count made tolerably good his cause with the old people at the Château. They could not but appreciate his devotion and pity his sufferings. Though no way forgetful of what was due to the peace and dignity of their grandchild, they could scarcely reject his prayer to be allowed to continue his work in the church. "And was there not something," he suggested, "of the harsh intolerance of youth in this unrelenting rejection of a true and ardent affection, which their greater experience and larger charity could not altogether approve? Was it not likely that Mdlle. de Férias herself would be visited with serious misgivings, when she reflected that her inflexible resolution destroyed the happiness of two human beings, whose union, she herself allowed, presented more than one condition of happiness? And for what?" he continued:—"Because the man who loved her so tenderly and deeply—whom she herself deemed worthy of some return—was a man of his time, a child of the age, and, perhaps, one of the least unworthy. For though I am an unbeliever," he went on to say, "I am not an impious one; my incredulity is neither aggressive nor triumphant, but full of sadness and a deep respect. I honour and envy

those who possess the truth. For my own part, I seek it in all the sincerity and bitterness of my soul."

And when they recalled the many instances of the extraordinary power which their granddaughter's sweet and noble disposition had exercised over the most opposite characters, they asked themselves might not this young man's troubled soul likewise become appeased and purified in the same heavenly atmosphere? "Well, my child," said the old man, with a smile not wholly divested of embarrassment, as Sibylle, with an eager, questioning look, entered the room, "we have gone over to the enemy!" She was absolutely thunderstruck—saw how they had been fascinated with the Count, and in her heart reproached them for their weakness, the consequences of which she could not contemplate without a secret dread. None but herself could know all it had cost her to stifle, and, after all, only half stifle, a passion which her reason condemned. She felt the danger very great now, her lover near, and the protection of her natural guardians withdrawn. She resolved to make one great effort to remain mistress of her destiny.

The scaffolding had been partly removed from the nave of the church, in preparation for the service of the following day. Count Raoul, who had returned with a lighter heart from his interview at the Château, was taking advantage of the partial clearance to study more minutely the effect of his performance, when he heard the church door open, and then close, and presently beheld Mlle. de Férias walking down the nave. Astonishment fixed him to the spot, and a shudder ran through his frame as he noticed the proud bearing and darkening look of the young girl. After a moment's pause, addressing him, she said:—

"I have come myself, Count de Chaly, to beg of you to restore to my life the liberty and the peace which your presence here deprives me of. You must excuse me if I hesitate in the choice of arguments I should use in trying to persuade you. I know not whether it is to your conscience or to your honour I should appeal—your conscience, I greatly fear, acknowledges no law but your own fancy and your own good pleasure—and you will allow I have but little to hope from its dictates, since it has not prevented your pursuing a line of conduct which a nice sense of decorum would have reproved."

"Good heavens!" murmured the Count, stunned by the sharp tone and studied coldness of the young girl's language.

"I prefer appealing to your honour, however," continued Sibylle, "and to those sentiments of propriety and delicacy which men, no matter how estranged they may be from all ideas of common-place morality, are compelled to respect, when they are well bred and solicitous to preserve the character of gentlemen. Let me, then, remind you, Count de Chaly, that there is a strict and unquestioned law of honour which forbids a gentleman to intrude by persecution and intrigue on one who rejects his advances."

The Count crossed his arms on his breast with an air of cold resigna-

tion, while Sibylle went on to take from him every hope that the influence of friends, or his perseverance, or the course of time could make her hold his conduct in less abhorrence.

"Stop, Mademoiselle," said he at last, "let me be sure that it is you who speak, and not one of those statues of stone I see about me!"

A flash of anger shot through the young girl's eyes. "She who addresses you," she went on rapidly, "is a woman who has been shamefully outraged, and who certainly would not have been subject to such indignity, if you had found her protected by an arm capable of defending or avenging her!"

This was too much for Count Raoul to bear; he struck his hand violently on the woodwork of the screen, confronted her full in the face, and commanded her to begone! And seeing that utterly confounded by the terror of his look, she remained fixed to the spot, he went on, in the most vehement manner, to reproach her with her childish folly, her want of true charity, her misunderstanding of the real sense of religion. He loved her tenderly, faithfully, madly, in spite of all the indignities, bitterness, and injustice which she heaped upon him; and his crime was that he had no faith! She esteemed the old village crones perfect saints because they came of a Sunday to fall asleep at a sermon; but she made no allowance for him who had all his life been seeking truth with the whole strength of his mind, and in the bitterness of his heart! And then, pointing to the cross above the altar, while her eyes were fixed on him with a singular expression of mingled interest and terror, he read her a lesson on justice and charity, spoke of his doubts and his despair, which had left him at least one virtue, which she did not possess—the virtue of mercy, and said that, "now he knew her well, he would obey her and leave her without regret!"

Sibylle seemed to hesitate a moment, then advancing towards him, she implored him, in a tone of gentleness and supplication, to try to understand her motives; she poured out her heart, and her sorrow, and her love. She thought she saw a yielding to better sentiments on his side. "Ah!" said she, with a faint smile, "if I only thought I should ever see you praying at that altar!" "I must not deceive you," answered Raoul; "I do not see much chance of it, I am so far from faith! And yet it seems to me that if ever I were to feel anything like it, it would be here—in this dear church—near that good old priest—and near you, Sibylle!" She fixed her eyes steadily on him, and then, advancing to the altar, knelt down on the steps, and, her head buried in her hands, prayed fervently for some time. "May it come soon!" she said, with a smile, looking at Count Raoul, as she passed. No other sound but the rustle of her garments on the pavement broke the silence as she left the church.

There was to be peace between them, it had been agreed, and they were to meet as friends. A gleam of hope had shone upon Sibylle, and she left the church in a state almost of ecstasy. She was aware that the compromise entered into was one of the subterfuges which passion so often

suggests. But she did not reproach herself. She knew that the instincts of the heart are wiser at some moments of our life than the most rigid rules of reason. She foresaw the difficulties, dangers, sorrows, inseparable from the part she had undertaken, but she entered on her course with a secret joy. Her love had been completely re-awakened, and even intensified by contact with the passion of Raoul: she had learnt, at the same time, to render him more justice, and to regard him with a higher esteem. From that moment it seemed to her that, instead of following the dictates of the rigid principles which she had hitherto obeyed, a new duty, more noble and more sweet, was laid upon her, and she was resolved to dedicate herself to the moral regeneration of that beloved soul, and to sacrifice, in that generous endeavour, her peace, her happiness, and even, is needs be, her life itself. The Marquis and M^{de}. de Férias saw in the compromise which had been made little more than a *ruse* for effecting an honourable retreat. They were well satisfied. So, too, was the Curé, who was most favourably disposed to the Count—a troubled soul, no doubt, but not a perverse mind—a prize worthy of heaven, and one whom it would be very wrong to despair of. Little by little Raoul became one of the family circle at Férias. The hours which were not occupied by his work at the church were spent with the good Curé, or at the Château. The saintly simplicity of the presbytery, the patriarchal dignity of the Marquis's household, the family devotions, in which he joined, the peace which brooded over all, formed an atmosphere in which he began to breathe new life.

Sibylle noted the change, but was too wise to mistake the Count's tender emotions and poetic impressions for serious moral regeneration and positive faith. But the Curé re-assured her. "God," he would say, "makes himself felt in the heart—he does not prove his existence to the intellect. Let the heart once expand, and the radical objections of the intellect will soon be absorbed and lost. If he once believes in God, I will charge myself with the rest." Sibylle studiously avoided the subject in conversation. Such settled serenity was apparent in her manner that the Count became alarmed, mistaking it for indifference. He feared she had accepted the stipulation according to the letter, and now thought no more of the mysterious possibility on which their future happiness depended. But he deceived himself. The subject was never absent from her mind. She thought of it sometimes with feelings of deep discouragement, sometimes with raptures of joyful anticipation. "Alas!" said she, one day, to the Curé, "is it not the extreme of folly to hope that a heart so hardened can be touched in so short a time, and by such feeble means? Only some great shock can work such a change." And then, after a pause, she added, with a melancholy smile, "I sometimes think, dear father, that if I were to die, he might then believe." Whereupon the old man made a sign to her to put away such thoughts, while his own eyes filled with tears. Another day, having fancied she detected some good sign in the look or words of the Count: "Ah! my father," said she, to the old priest, "what a dream it is! too beautiful to be ever realized on earth, I fear—to save from evil, and lead back to God, one loved so deeply, so passion-

ately!" and she uttered the words with an expression of infinite love and longing. "Ah! what a dream it is!"

This strange life had lasted two months, when Count Raoul was one evening called off suddenly to Paris. Some terrible trouble had happened, and he arrived hardly in time to be present at the horrible death of his friend, M. Gandrax. The scenes he went through during his stay in Paris destroyed the charm of the last few months. The contact with the hard realities, the wild passions, the inexorable materialism of the life about him threw him back into the cold regions of scepticism. He awoke, as it were, from a dream; the life he had been leading at Férias now seemed almost childish, and Sibylle's love for him but a poor transcript of real passion. He thought he must give up this senseless probation, and break a hopeless attachment. Scarcely had he entered the Château, when the quick instinct of Sibylle made her aware that something had gone very wrong. There was a visible restraint on each side all through the evening. Once more Sibylle resolved to confront her fate, whatever it might be. Late in the evening, when the Count was about to return to the village, she threw a light cloak over her shoulders, drew the hood over her head, and taking Raoul's arm, crossed the park in the cold, clear moonlight, and led him into the depths of the wild woods, to the very haunts of her childhood and the resting-places of her youth.

But we cannot describe what followed; the end was at hand. Sibylle's presentiment was verified; a great shock broke the barriers, and the stream of grace flowed into Count Raoul's soul. He did pray with his forehead on the steps of that altar, and she won the prize on which she had staked her peace, her happiness, and her life. From his own lips she heard his confession, that he truly shared her steadfast faith, her everlasting hopes. But for earthly happiness it was all too late. Sibylle's mission was accomplished, and another white slab was laid on the green turf of the church-yard.

A sad termination to the story! Yes, for we have come to love this brilliant, tender, resolute Sibylle, and do not like to lose her now. And yet, what other ending of a story or a life could be more beautiful?—The noblest earthly purpose accomplished, and heaven at hand: the soul trembling for a moment on the confines of time and eternity, flushed with a two-fold radiance, the splendour of the sunset, and the glory of the dawn!

"THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW."

WE have seldom read anything more touching than Dame Quickley's description of Falstaff's last moments. "After," she says, "I saw him fumble with the sheets, and play with flowers, and smile upon his finger-ends, I knew there was but one way, for his nose was as sharp as a pen, and he babbled of green fields." What a change was here; Jack Falstaff—merry, old Jack, to whom all the charms of rural felicity were as

nothing compared with the noisy uproar of the tavern, babbling of green fields, and smiling upon his finger-ends with simpering imbecility ! This contrast, so well described in the case of Falstaff, is frequently perceptible when the mind, participating in the decay of the body, becomes weak and wandering, and strays away into trains of thought quite foreign to previous habit and occupation. No influence of association could have given this particular character to his last impressions. His whole life was spent in the city, and Eastcheap was the region of some of his most ecstatic moments. One would not be surprised, therefore, if the Boar's Head and Dame Quickly, and Prince Hal, and Poins, and Bardolph, and all the other companions of his mad-cap revelries, danced in mazy circumgyration through the brain of this old dying knight, but flowers and green fields. This, indeed, looks a strange perversion of ideas. It was, however, one of those symptoms of dissolution which, from their general occurrence, have acquired a kind of scientific certainty, and are received as certain indications of severance between the spirit and flesh.

There is nothing so utterly inexplicable as that presentiment of death which takes hold on the minds of men, without any apparent cause, to induce such an impression. There are numerous instances of where men, in perfect health, have had an instinctive knowledge that they would soon die; and not only that, but the exact time and place have been foreshadowed to them, with an amazing degree of certainty. Science has essayed to explain this phenomenon, but without any practical result; it remains still as wrapt in mystery as ever. No one can tell whence comes this knell of doom, or from what voiceless tribunal the sentence is breathed with so prophetic a certainty. Addison used to say that the accounts of great men's behaviour in their dying hour should form the most pleasing and instructive feature of history. "If," said he, "I were a maker of books, I would compile a register, with comments of various deaths, for he who should teach men to die, would teach them to live." Death, from pure old age, is a thing of very rare occurrence. We seldom hear of a body wearing itself out, and without any particular malady sinking down by a process of slow, and unperceived decay. The most usual thing is, that some disease is generated. Lord Chesterfield, when age had reduced him to a state of decrepitude, and he was obliged to drive slowly, in order to avoid any unpleasant jolting, said, "I am now going to the rehearsal of my funeral." In his case, the mind had retained to the last all its former vigour. One remarkable feature of old age is, that the memory often remains unimpaired when all the other mental faculties are almost completely worn out. It is often seen that passing events excite in old men but a feeble interest, whilst things which occurred fifty years previously, are remembered far more vividly, and discussed and conned over with an interest, far more intense than any which a contemporaneous circumstance could create. Matters of the most trifling importance, and the most minute detail are engraved distinctly on the mind, and remembered with a degree of exactness and precision perfectly wonderful. The brain, like a set mould, is incapable of new impressions, but preserves the old ones.

Some curious analogies have been built up by physiologists between the morning and evening of life. Sir Walter Scott, when verging towards the starting point of the circle, as he called it, said he wished he could cut a new set of teeth. This is what is popularly called second childhood. The contrast is remarkable, one receding towards the grave, the other advancing into life, and strength, and vigour; both are feeble in their perceptions, but with infancy the germ is present, and will grow and fructify; with old age, it is the feebleness which arises from decay, the difference between immaturity and rottenness. Is it a pleasing death to die out piecemeal, to see the curtain gradually descend, and as we pass slowly from the stage of life to hear its echoings, whispered faintly in our ears? We should think it must be so. Time, they say, is a gentle destroyer. The organs degenerate painlessly, and the system dwindles down, keeping up a perfect harmony in all its parts.

Paley asserted, that happiness was with old age in its easy chair, as with youth in all its strength and vigour; it may not be so buoyant and intense, but it is more placid. As an illustration of that presentiment we have spoken of, the case of Ozanam, the celebrated mathematician, affords us an instance. He refused to take pupils, from the conviction that he was about to die, and soon after, an apoplectic stroke terminated all his labours.

Mozart wrote his own requiem, and when his life was ebbing away, he said, "Did I not tell you that it was for myself I composed this death chant?"

Hogarth was so deeply impressed with the feeling that he was about to die, painted a subject which should symbolise the coming event. Some friend inquired what the subject of his next painting was to be, and he replied, "the end of all things."

"In that case," replied some one of the party present, "there will be an end of the painter." "There will," said Hogarth solemnly, "and, therefore, the sooner my work is done the better." As he gave this picture the last touch, he seized his palette, broke it into pieces, and said, "I have finished." It was true, death soon chilled for ever the hand which traced the picture. John Hunter has attempted a solution of this mystery. "We sometimes," he says, "feel within ourselves, that we shall not live, for the living powers become weak, and the nerves communicate the intelligence to the brain." This, though, perhaps, the most plausible explanation that could be given, will not bear the test of very severe scrutiny. If the living powers become weak, surely there will be some physical manifestation of the fact. There is an instance given of Foote the actor, when on hearing of Weston's death, said "poor Weston!" in the same dejected tone, he added, "soon others shall say poor Foote!"

This was a case of, where a man already in feeble health, was reminded that he himself, trembling on the brink of the grave, should soon follow. The death of his friend was suggestive of his own. He knew he was sinking, and that his time could not be far off, and, by a most natural process of association, it occurred to him, that others would soon pay the same tribute to his memory that he had given to a brother-actor. But how is it,

when a man, strong and vigorous, without the slightest symptom of any bodily ailments, has upon his mind, the presentiment of coming death, and that that presentiment is so often verified? Cardinal Wolsley, before he died, asked the hour, and was answered past eight. "Eight of the clock," replied Wolsley, "that cannot be, eight of the clock, eight of the clock—nay, it cannot be eight of the clock, for by eight of the clock shall you loose your master." He miscalculated the day, but the hour was perfectly correct. How could disease have told so accurately the precise hour? It is an old belief, that confidence in the doctor is half the cure, and this is reasonable. The close connection which undoubtedly exists between the mind and body has this effect. Both exercise a reciprocal influence upon each other, and act as a kind of mutual support. The case which everybody knows about the Paris physician, who, trying the effect of imagination, killed the culprit as effectually as if he had plunged a dagger into his breast, although, in reality, he only pinched him, and allowed luke-warm water to trickle gently along his arm, affords a remarkable instance of how powerfully mental impressions can act.

We wonder has the reader of this article ever sat by the bed-side of a person dying. If so, the scene, we have no doubt, has left upon his mind, (or if a lady is in the case, equally so,) a recollection of it not easily effaced. Startling likenesses to relations are sometimes revealed in the expiring patient, and often too, the self of other days, is reflected with a wondrous fidelity; picking at the sheets too, or working them between the fingers, is a frequent sign; this may be a nervous impulse, and is often done to excite, by friction, the sense of touch, which is growing benumbed. People amongst the poorer class, receive it as the sentence of death. Once the patient begins to act in this manner, they abandon all hope.

It is quite a usual thing for the dying to hold conversations with imaginary persons; often the forms of departed friends are conjured up, and they talk to them with a remarkable degree of collectedness. This has given rise to the popular superstition, that the dead are calling to them to join them. We knew an instance of where a young girl, dying of consumption, said, immediately before she expired,—“I am coming, dear mother; I am coming.” Those who knelt round, regarded it as a summons from the other world. The old idea, that the monitor of man called to him when the last moment had arrived, is referred to by Shakspeare in his play of “Troilus and Cressida”—

“Hark! you are called; some say the Genius so
Cries COME! to those that instantly must die.”

We have noticed the fact that oftentimes the mind turns upon matters having no connection whatever with previous habits. The contrary to this is also the case when the sensibility to outward impressions is completely lost or disordered; the past comes back to the mind of the dying person, and out of it is constructed an imaginary present. Napoleon fought his battles over again, and the last words which fell from his lips were

tête d'armée. Lord Tenterden expired with—"Gentlemen of the jury, you will now consider your verdict." This is what one would expect. The soldier's last thoughts were associated with scenes and incidents which formed the drama of his whole life; the lawyer imagined himself on the judicial seat, whilst he was fast hastening to render his account before another and far higher tribunal.

There is a species of delirium which sometimes precedes death, and bears a strong resemblance to drunkenness. Consciousness remains, but self-control is completely gone. All the natural characteristics remain, as they have been developed by habit or nature, without the discretion to modify them as interest might suggest. It often happens, in cases of this kind, that predominant passions evince themselves. Men who have been in the habit of cursing leave this world with an oath upon their lips, and persons who in life have been the most cautious retailers of scandal, and petty calumnies against their acquaintances, frequently die uttering, openly and directly, imputations of the worst possible character against their friends. Those who derive a moral from everything will not have much difficulty in pointing one here.

What Shakspeare calls a "lightening before death" is very usual;—not in the sense of merriment, as he speaks of it, but in a sudden apparent cessation of the disease, and a deceptive appearance of returning health. A medical student, on seeing this, called to a companion, "Come and see, the fever is going!" The other, more experienced, regarded the patient for a while, and replied—"No, it is the patient."

Catalepsy is a form of disease rarely to be met with. It has been productive of more thrilling anecdotes than any other which has ever afflicted human nature. We knew of an old lady who was being conveyed to the church-yard, under circumstances of this nature, when, by some lucky accident, the coffin (as the story goes) struck against the corner of a house, and woke her from the death-like sleep in which she had been for some days. On making proper representations that she was really living, she was, of course, liberated, although there is a tradition that it was exceedingly hard to convince her husband. However, she returned home, and in a few months bore unto her lord a beautiful boy, whose name was "Abey," and who was distinguished in after life by an enormously large head, a peculiarity which people attributed to his mother's adventure. Stories of this kind are numerous enough to fill a book, and are quite as reliable as is the legend of the English saint, who, saying Mass, one fine summer's morning, for the dead, in the open air, was answered, when he repeated the words, "*Requiescant in pace*," by a chorus of voices from a neighbouring church-yard, responding, "Amen." This belief that people often come to life in the grave is prevalent in most countries. In fact, some writers have gone so far as to say, "That the number of those buried alive is almost equal to those really dead." It is said of the Turks that, if a noise is heard in a tomb, they dig up the corpse, and, by way of removing all manner of doubt on the matter, chop it up into pieces.

A man of war, who was the subject of a cataleptic fit, had the good

the good fortune to come to life in a dissecting-room, and, on opening his eyes, and seeing around the mutilated bones and bodies of his fellow-subjects, exclaimed, "I perceive that the action has been hot." Stories of this kind are sufficiently numerous to prove the absurdity of believing in the truth of them. The only circumstance which could give a colour of credibility to all this, is the fact that bodies have often been found turned in their coffins, and the shroud so disarranged as to lead to the presumption of a violent struggle after interment. There is a gas developed in the decaying body, which produces contortions similar to the movements of life. So powerful is it, that it sometimes bursts open the coffin with an explosive noise, which the imagination finds little difficulty in converting into a moan, and when the grave is opened, the position of the body confirms the suspicion. Medical students are often startled by the body jumping up suddenly from the table.

There are numerous passages in the writings of Shakspeare descriptive of death. Some of its most obvious characteristics are given in that passage where the Friar gives Juliet the draught which is to transform her into the likeness of a corpse:—

"Take thou this phial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off,
When presently through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour, for no pulse
Shall keep his native progress, but sur-cease;
No warmth, no breath shall testify thou livest;
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To pale ashes; thy eyes' windows fall
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life.
Each part deprived of supple government,
Shall stiff, and stark, and cold appear, like death."

The "agony," which is generally considered the act of dying, is by no means so painful as is popularly supposed. As life ebbs away there is a gradual extinction of corporal feeling. In books of medical jurisprudence, there are numerous instances of the peculiar sensations which accompany death. The accounts given of the early executions in England have a ghastly humour about them, yet, they illustrate forcibly the fact, that it is an easy thing to die. In the reign of Henry IV., Sir Thomas Blount was condemned to death. He was hanged in the usual form, then cut down, before life was extinct, and seated on a bench before a fire, which was prepared specially for the purpose of consuming his entrails. The executioner, with razor in hand, knelt and asked his pardon. "Are you the person," inquired Sir Thomas, "appointed to deliver me from this world?" "Yes," answered the executioner, and having received the kiss of peace, proceeded with the razor to rip up his belly.

"Death itself," says Pascal, "is less painful when it comes upon us unawares, than the bare contemplation of it even when danger is far distant." And how comes this? Simply because we are accustomed to regard that solemn moment, in which the thread of life is snapped, as one

of awful import. "The fear of something after death," too, is another all-powerful motive for clinging to existence; yet, the idea that the pain of dying is the climax of the disease is altogether erroneous. To be shot is one of the easiest methods of destroying life; yet its sudden and violent character attaches to it the idea of great physical pain, momentary though it be. A soldier will tell you that a gun-shot wound is not accompanied with much suffering at the time—the impression is more stunning than acute. Lord Byron has remarked this physiological peculiarity, that the faces of men shot generally bear the appearance of langour, whilst death from stabbing always impresses upon the countenance traits of natural character—of gentleness or ferocity, according to the disposition of the person killed.

A strong mind meets death calmly. No nobler instance of this occurs, in ancient or modern history, than the death of Socrates. He was a philosopher. Yet philosophers are but men, and subject to all the weakness of humanity, but he was more; he was a man possessed in a high degree of that much-admired quality called "courage," which steels the soldier's mind, even in the cannon's mouth—not against an appreciation of the danger which he incurs, but to a sublime determination to sacrifice even life itself in the discharge of duty. This is what is called moral courage—the intellectual and most elevated degree of valour—and this is what Socrates had pre-eminently. His death was a voluntary martyrdom for a religious faith. He felt deeply the solemnity of the occasion—but he drained the poisoned draught with the greatest possible composure, only inquiring if it were sufficient to admit of some being poured out as a libation.

It has been mentioned that the human head, for several minutes after severance from the body, is capable of thought and sensation—that the ear hears, and the eye sees, and the lips move in utterance. There is a case of a young lady, who was brought to the guillotin during the French revolution, when the executioner held up her head, and struck her on the cheek, she blushed visibly. From this and many other instances, this curious theory has been adduced. If we had time, we could go on multiplying instances of those mysterious phenomena which surround the bed of the dying. There is no subject so suggestive of grave reflection, but, moralise as we will, the self-same conclusion of that venerable magistrate, Justice Shallow, must be the burden of all our thoughts. "Certain 'tis certain," quoth his worship, "very sure, very sure: death," as the Psalmist saith "is certain to all: all shall die." It is said of Father Bridaine, a celebrated French preacher of the last century, that he once announced to his auditory, that he would conduct each one of them home; and putting himself at their head, brought them to—a neighbouring church-yard. It was a striking and novel mode of impressing upon them a great truth. Without the remotest intention of preaching a sermon, we have been harmlessly indulging a similar eccentricity in our endeavour to conduct our readers "through the Valley of the Shadow."

THE FATE OF THE LADY GORMLAITH;

OR, THE "FOURTH SORROW OF IRELAND."

AMONG the innumerable tales and romances which are preserved in the still voluminous remains of the ancient learning of Ireland, there are three stories, which, from the mournful and pathetic nature of their details, have always occupied a prominent place in the imaginative literature of a people susceptible in the highest degree, (as the Irish have ever been,) of tender and emotional feelings. They are "The Death of the Children of Touran;" "The Death of the Children of Lear, or Lir;" and "The Fate of the Children of Usneach—" popularly known as the "Three Tragic Stories of Erin." Although these tales are known only by their names, to the present generation of Irishmen—the two last-mentioned stories, indeed, being largely, if not entirely indebted for the preservation of even their titles to Moore's ballads, "Silent, oh! Moyle, be the Roar of thy Waters," and "Avenging and Bright fall the Swift Sword of Erin,"—they formed, at a period within the memory of men still living, the never-failing source of mingled sorrow and delight to the Irish-speaking populations of districts far removed from the contaminating influence of trashy novels, of the Monk Lewis and Godwin schools of fiction.

With the decay of the Irish language, however, towards the close of the last century, disappeared likewise that peculiar class of professional "men of talk," as they were called, the *Fin-Skelaighe*, or Fenian Story-tellers, whose presence at weddings, wakes, or other rustic assemblages, was eagerly welcomed by old and young, and the most remarkable representative of whom, in modern times, the celebrated Cormac Common, died near Dunmore, in the county Galway, about sixty years ago. Although with the death of Cormac Common, who united in an eminent degree, the kindred offices of rhymester and *Fin-Skelaighe*, *Dres-bheartach*,* or Story-teller, the *conteurs*, as a class, may be said to have become extinct, a few of its members lingered in the remote districts of Clare, Cork, Kerry, and Mayo, until the introduction of the National System of Education; the promoters of which, by attaching penalties to the cultivation of the old language, by the pupils of the New Schools, administered a death-blow to the romantic literature from which the most distinguished poets, historians, and dramatists of Great Britain have enriched their pages; and the beauties and imagery of which, as rendered into English by Macpherson, exercised an influence over the great mind of the First Napoleon, which the effusions of his favourite Roman poets failed to produce.

Had Napoleon been able to have read the poems ascribed to Ossian, in the Irish language, instead of through the unequal and tortured, but still beautiful version of the ingenious and dishonest Scotchman, how much greater would have been his admiration! for although as a work of art, Macpherson's Ossian has not in later times been, and perhaps will not be,

* The word *Dres-bheartach* literally signifies a tale-bearer; but the title was applied to a person who related ancient tales for the amusement of an audience.

surpassed, it is far inferior in intensity of poetic feeling, in sublimity of thought and force of expression, to the original poems, which he is supposed to have transfused, rather than translated, into English.

The translation of the poetry of one nation into the language of another, in verse, is, of all literary tasks, the most difficult; for poetry is of so subtle a spirit, that in pouring it out of one tongue into another, it will evaporate; and if a new spirit be not added to the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *caput mortuum*. For, as Lord Roscommon says in his "Essay on Translated Verse:"

"Words in one language, elegantly used,"

Will, in another, scarcely be excused;

And some that Rome admired in Cæsar's time

May neither suit our genius, nor our clime."

To the translator of our earlier poems, and even prose narratives, the difficulties are almost insurmountable. Abounding, as they do, in idiomatic forms of expression long since forgotten; filled with compound words and epithets which have no equivalent, even in the profuse vocabulary of the English tongue; overflowing with poetic imagery, drawn from subjects of air, earth, and sea, for which no names are now discoverable; and, worse than all, with a grammar in the utmost state of confusion, from long neglect—the task may well appear discouraging to the most persevering. But, notwithstanding these difficulties, beauties may still be culled from the fertile fields of Celtic poetry, compared to which the turgid effusions of Anglo-Saxon antiquity, the early lays and romances of France, the ditties of German Minnesingers, and the frigid songs of the Norse and Danish poets—stern and harsh as the storms of their native climes—are poor, pitiful, and barbarous.

Though shorn of many of the charms which the grace, dignity, and beauty of the vernacular fling round the simple, mournful narratives which constitute "The Three Sorrows of Erin," the lover of romance may still derive singular pleasure from their perusal, even in the diluted translation in which they have been presented to the public, by the late Gaelic Society of Dublin.* He may still be moved to sadness at learning how "Mighty Touran's offspring fell," may weep at the cruel fate of the sons of Lir,

"Changed to the swan's high-soaring form;

Conn, Aida, and Fiola fair,

And Fiach, who braved each gloomy storm,"

and join in the general detestation which attaches to the memory of their inexorable step-mother; but his sympathy will be reserved in largest measure for the woes of the children of Usneach and the tragic fate of the beautiful Deirdre—the victims they, and she the Nemesis, of King Conor Mac Nessa's treachery and lust.

The scene of the story of Touran's children, like that of the sons of Lir, (both of Tuatha-de-Danaan origin) is referred to a time so far removed from the period at which authentic Irish chronology commences, that,

* "Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin," vol. I. Dublin: 1806.

irrespective of the magic machinery on which the interest of each tale is made to hang, the judicious critic will naturally rank them among the romantic compositions of an age long subsequent to that in which the subjects of them are said to have existed; but the circumstances attending the murder of the children of Usneach, by Conehobar, or Connor Mac Nessa—their escape from Ireland to Scotland, their subsequent return, on a promise of protection, under the knightly oath of the king; their betrayal and violent end; with the mournful fate of the peerless Deidra, who died of grief, invoking vengeance on the head of the perfidious monarch—are as susceptible of historic proof as any event in Connor's reign. And the most exact chronologists extend the earliest limits of true Irish history to 300 years before his death, which occurred about the middle of the first century of the Christian Era; the period whence may be dated the decline of the famous school of chivalry which, under the name of the "Red-branch Knights," or Knights of the Red-hand,* and under the leadership of Conor Mac Nessa, Fergus Mac Roy, Cuchullin, and Conall Cearnach, asserted its supremacy over the warlike tribes of Ulster, until the defection of Fergus, whose guarantee had been violated by his nephew, Conor, when he effected the destruction of the three accomplished brothers, Naisi, Aine, and Ardan.

The circumstances attending their death are, as we have said, truly affecting, but the history of Ireland contains, at least, one more catastrophe, which, had it occurred a few centuries earlier, when the praise of beauty and virtue, the denunciation of tyranny, and the invocation of sympathy and sorrow for the afflicted furnished the burden of story and of song, would have assumed a place in romantic narrative as "The Fourth Sorrow of Erin." We allude to the sufferings and death of the beautiful, virtuous, and accomplished Queen Gormlaith, whose eventful history is recorded in the "Book of Leinster," a manuscript of the twelfth century, preserved in the Library of Trinity College,* and in many other ancient documents in the same invaluable collection.

Gormlaith, or Gormley, was the daughter of Flann Sionna, hereditary King of Meath, of the royal line of O'Melaghlin, or Maelseachlain, who succeeded to the monarchy of Ireland on the death of Aedh Fianlaith, in the year 876. The date of her birth is not given in the Irish Annals, which, although they generally note the age of an individual when recording his death, are deficient in this instance; but it would appear to have

* The Ulster Chivalry are popularly known as the Red-branch Knights, and sometimes called Knights of the *Royal Branch*, on what authority it is difficult to say; for if the Irish words *Craobh-dhearg* correctly represent the name, it should undoubtedly be interpreted red-branch. It amounts to almost a certainty, however, for many reasons not enumerable here, that they were characterised *Craobh-dhearg*, or the red-band, and not *Craobh-dhearg*, the latter error being traceable, perhaps, to the mistake of some scribe, perpetuated by his copyists.

† See it also referred to in "O'Curry's Manuscript Materials of Irish History," pp. 131, 467. Dublin: James Duffy, 1861; the most Comprehensive Digest of Ancient Irish Literature ever published.

occurred about the year 880. Her biographers dwell with rapture on the remarkable indications which her youth presented of that talent which was destined to elevate her in after times to the summit of fame, while it also furnished the source of her misfortune and sufferings.

At the early age of 12 years, she is said to have exerted her muse in celebrating the glories of her father, then hotly engaged with the clans of Cannaught, whom he compelled to give hostages; but the earliest of her productions, which has been preserved to the present day, is the lay in which, four years later, she lamented the death of her brother, Maolruanaidh, who was slain by a neighbouring tribe. A couplet of this song, the antiquated idiom of which does not admit of a literal English translation, has been thus rendered by Dr. O'Donovan, in his edition of the "Annals of the Four Masters," under the year 896:—

*"On a hard Wednesday I parted with Maolruanaidh, the nobly gifted,
On Thursday I began to think on being without my father's son."*

Accomplished in all the arts and learning of the period, which she acquired while under the tuition of the celebrated poet, Flann Mac Lonan, the Chief Poet of Ireland, and the Virgil of his race and time, who was then attached to her father's court; gifted with the most fascinating manners and address, and endowed besides with the fatal gift of beauty, she was surrounded by suitors as soon as she had attained to the dignity of womanhood. There was but one among them, however, capable of inspiring Gormlaith with esteem and love. That man was Cormac Mac Cuillennain, King of Munster, and afterwards Archbishop of Cashel, then in the full meridian of a reputation which, after the lapse of nearly a thousand years, is still as fresh and undiminished as when he added the last stroke of his pen to the imperishable monument of his genius, which, under the name of "Cormac's Glossary," forms one of the priceless treasures of the Royal Irish Academy. The mutual love of Cormac and Gormlaith, so rich in promises of future happiness for both, but which resulted in the ruin of the former, and in bitterness, woe, and disappointment to the latter, formed the subject of many exquisite poems, in which she bewailed the deficiency of her own mind, contrasted with the brilliant genius of the Momonian Prince.

The day of their betrothal at last arrived, to the inexpressible joy of Gormlaith; but her joy, alas! was shortlived, for when the ambassadors of King Flann arrived at Cashel, to summon Cormac to the wedding feast, they were met by a stern refusal; nor could the supplications, reclamations, or threats of the ambassadors alter the extraordinary resolution which he had formed.

This unaccountable proceeding on the part of Cormac produced the utmost consternation at the court of Flann Sionna; for, independently of its effects on the mind of Gormlaith, who loved the object of her choice with a fervour which abated not through the vicissitudes of her subsequent sad career, it involved an insult to the dignity of the Irish monarch, which called for revenge. And revenged it should be; but, as Cashel was a long

distance from Dun-na-Sciath* in those days, and as Flann had enough to do to hold his own against the surrounding septs, and the Danish tribes who were settled in Dublin and along the Boyne, he determined to await a more favourable occasion for vengeance.

The repudiation of Gormlaith by Cormac is the only circumstance in his holy and heroic life requiring defence or explanation. Some of his apologists ascribe it to some malignant slanders uttered by the rejected suitors of the lady, combined with political motives; but, in a poem attributed to Cormac, it is distinctly stated that his repudiation of Gormlaith proceeded, not from any diminution of his regard for the young princess, but from a resolution which he had formed, to renounce the pleasures of the world for the austere rule of the clergy of the period, which resolution, certainly, he soon after carried out, to the glory of the faith, of which he became one of the firmest and most enlightened supporters.

This was Gormlaith's first great sorrow. Till then she had lived a joyous, happy life; surrounded by every object that could make existence desirable, prized and envied by all, but envying none. Contemporary bards, and bards of later date, have attempted to pourtray the bitterness of her feelings, the depth of her melancholy; but the songs in which she herself lamented her fate are still in existence, while the more elaborate but less impassioned compositions of her eulogists are forgotten.

Her father, observing the despondency to which she had become a prey, determined that she should wed; a determination to which, though disagreeable to her, she uncomplainingly, but unwillingly, assented. The husband selected for her by her father—for she had no longer a heart to confer—was Cearbhall, King of Leinster, a man entirely unsuited to Gormlaith. Strengthened by this alliance, which was probably cemented for the very object, Flann Siouna resolved to bring to an account Cormac MacCuillemain, now Archbishop, as well as King of Cashel, for the insult offered to his person and family, and, with the ostensible purpose of asserting his claim to the right of presentation to the church of Monasterevan, proceeded, in the year 908, to make war on the southern Prince-prelate. Accompanied by his son-in-law, the King of Leinster, he marched, with their united forces, to *Bealagh Mughna*,† now Ballymoon, in the south of Kildare, where he was met by Cormac, at the head of the men of Munster. A

* Dun-na-Sciath, i.e., the fort of the shield, on the borders of Lough Ainnin, now Lough Ennell, near Mullingar. The monarchs of Ireland usually resided at Tara, until that place was cursed by St. Ruadhan, of Lorrha, in the county Tipperary, in the year 565, for some violence offered to him by the reigning monarch, Diarmid Mac Cearbhaill. Tara was deserted after that, the kings of the Northern Hy-Niall residing chiefly at their fortress of *Aileach*, near Londonderry, and those of the Southern Hy-Niall, first at the Rath, near Castlepollard, now *Dun-Torgeis*, and subsequently at *Dun-na-Sciath*.

† *Bealagh-Mughna*, i.e. Mughain's road, or pass, now Ballaghmoon, in the south of the county of Kildare, and about two miles and a-half to the north of the town of Carlow. The site of this battle is still pointed out at the place, and the stone on which King Cormac's head was cut off by a common soldier is also shown.

furious battle was fought between them, in which the Momonians were defeated, and Cormac, the King-bishop, killed and beheaded on the field.

The details of this battle form the subject of a curious poem, by a poet named Dallan, son of Mor, who furnishes valuable testimony as to the double dignity of Cormac, which some critics have been found to dispute; especially in the couplet, which may be translated :—

“ The Bishop, the Soul's Director, the renowned, illustrious Doctor,
King of Caiseal, King of Iarmumba (West Munster);
O God! alas, for Cormac!”

The death of Cormac overwhelmed Gormlaith with sorrow. Willingly, as she says, would she have laid down her own head on the stones on which Cormac's had been cut off, could such a sacrifice avert danger from the object of her youthful affections, of whose untimely fate she was the innocent cause, while the instruments—oh, horror!—were her own father and husband. From that day forth Gormlaith openly avowed for Cearbhall the aversion which she had hitherto struggled to suppress; but still, she did not the less tenderly watch over him while suffering, in his palace of Naas, from the wounds which he had received in the battle.

It happened one day, during his illness, that the eventful contest of Bealagh Mughna became the subject of their conversation. Cearbhall described the fight with animation, and dwelt with seeming exultation on the indignity offered to Cormac's body. The Queen gave vent to her indignation in a torrent of reproaches, which so roused the fury of Cearbhall that, forgetting the gravity of his position, and unmindful of the presence of her attendants, he inflicted personal chastisement on Gormlaith.

Mortified and insulted at the violence offered to her, Gormlaith fled to her father for protection; but he, being at the time apprehensive of an attack from the powerful Danish army of Dublin, and fearful of incurring the enmity of Cearbhall, should he espouse his daughter's quarrel, sent her back to her husband.

In this extremity, she applied to her cousin, Niall Glundubh, or the black-kneel, the son of her father's predecessor in the monarchy, and himself, subsequently one of the most vigorous princes that ever wielded the sceptre of Tara; who, at the head of the northern clans, marched to the borders of Leinster, with the intention of avenging the wrongs of Gormlaith, and taking her under the protection of the powerful forces of the north. The Queen, however, was averse to any violent measures, and only insisted on a separation from her husband, and the restoration of her dowry, both of which conditions were acceded to by Cearbhall.

Thus freed from her conjugal ties, Gormlaith returned, for the third time, to her father's house, where she continued to reside until, by the death of Cearbhall, who was killed by a Dane, named Hulb, in the year 909, she was enabled to dispose of her hand to the young prince who had so nobly responded to her summons in the preceding year.

Gormlaith had a son by Niall Glundubh, whom she regarded with the most passionate tenderness. The young prince, Domhnall, was sent to Galway to be fostered, as was the custom in those days. The grief of the

mother at parting with her only child is feelingly described in one of her most exquisite songs, while in another she gives vent to the agony which rent her soul when news arrived of the death of her son, who was drowned while sporting on Lough Corrib. With the exception of this circumstance, but little is known of Gormlaith's life until the death of her husband, the gallant Niall, who was slain while contending with the Danes in the battle of *Cill Mosomog*,* in the neighbourhood of Dublin. The fall of Niall, whom she regarded with feelings of admiration and gratitude, if not with love, reopened the fountains of her sorrow, which found vent in many plaintive and melancholy lays—some of which are not inferior in tenderness to the dirge of Deirdre over the tomb of her lover. In one of them, forgetful of the insults of Cearbhall, she couples his name with that of the brave prince whom she sorely lamented, observing—

“Evil towards me, the compliment of the two foreigners who slew Niall and Cearbhall;

Cearbhall was slain by Hulb—a great deed;

Niall Glundubh by Amhlaeibh.”

In another, devoted to the latter, she exclaims:—

“Where is the chief of the Western world—

Where the sun of every clash of arms?

Sorrowful this day is sacred Ireland,

Without its valiant chief;

It is to view the heavens without a sun—

To view Magh-Neill† without Niall.”

On the death of Niall Glundubh—than whom, with the exception of the immortal Brian Boromhe, no braver prince ever ascended the Irish throne, her brother, Donnchadh, succeeded to the monarchy, which he enjoyed until his death, in the year 942. During this time Gormlaith appears to have lived in retirement, treasuring the bitter memories of her previous sufferings, as no trace of her existence can be found in the records of the period. But with the death of Donnchadh the sceptre passed away from the houses of her father and her husband; and then commenced that career of poverty and neglect, of which she so feelingly speaks in her poems. Without a friend or protector—driven forth from the shelter which she enjoyed during her brother's reign—sore at heart and broken in spirit, Gormlaith, before whose beauteous figure the chiefs of Tara were wont to bow the knee, and whose virtues and accomplishments formed the theme of bard and *file*, was reduced to such a degree of want and wretchedness that she begged her bread from door to door, forsaken of all but the poor, who remembered her munificence in the days of her prosperity. In this condition she survived until the year 948, when it is stated that she who had been a thrice enthronéd queen,

“And daughter to a king,”

died of absolute starvation, in the country in which her ancestors had ruled like “true Irish kings,” and in endeavouring to protect which from the

* The place where this battle was fought has not yet been identified.

† Magh-Neill, a bardic name for Ireland.

ravages of the ruthless Danes, her husband, the noble Niall, had gallantly sacrificed his heroic life.

There is another short, but curious, account of her death given by Connell McGeoghegan, the translator of the "Annals of Clonmacnois," who wrote in the early part of the 17th century, and which, though not accepted as authentic, we may add here, by way of conclusion, observing that it does not correctly represent the nature of her last illness, which was really caused by the want of proper nourishment. It is as follows:—

"Gormlaith, daughter of King Flann Mac Mayleseachlyn, and Queen of Ireland, died of a tedious and grievous wound, which happened in this manner: She dreamed that she saw Niall Glendubh; whereupon she got up and sat in her bed to behold him; whom he for anger would forsake and leave the chamber; and as he was departing in that angry motion, (as she thought,) *she gave a snatch after him*, thinking to have taken him by the mantle, to keep him with her, and fell upon the bedst.ck of her bed, that it pierced her breast, even to her very heart, which received no cure until she died thereof."

The Queen did not, however, immediately die of the wound thus received, for it was during her last illness that she composed many of the curious poems, which are still preserved, in one of which she details the manner of the wound, which may have been the remote cause of her death, although the privation which she endured undoubtedly contributed to hasten it.

MENTAL CAPABILITIES AND PECULIARITIES.

BY R. A. LITHGOW.

Mysterious principle of life! by thee
We think, we feel, we move, we hear, we see;
Sailing a while on thy uncertain wave,
The harbour that receives us is the grave.

ANON.

MAN is the sole species of his genus, the sole representative of his own division and sub-class. There is no portion of creation in which the Creator has more clearly revealed to us His Omnipotence than in our own design, construction, and fulfilment. The most important organization of the human body must be confessed to exist in the mental faculties, by which no other species of animal creation is gifted, and which, in the sublimity of its reality, is undoubtedly the master-piece of the Almighty, as manifested to us. The capabilities and peculiarities of the human mind have engrossed the attention of many past generations, and although their utmost efforts have considerably tended to elucidate some of its teachings and general bearings, yet, even with all the present impetuous flow of the tide of knowledge, the more closely and attentively we study this great and important subject, the more we are led to contemplate its reality, and express our admiration and wonder. We can only now repeat and comment upon what, by the unreserved and devoted life-time of others, is at present known on

its interesting and engaging aspect, and while we are lost in amazement at its vast profundity, suffice it to say, that its contemplation is the source of, and ought to be the universal theme for, extolling the unlimited beneficence and goodness of the Almighty Creator. We, as human beings, have been assigned the government of every other portion of creation, we have each been made the recipients of certain talents, differing in quantity and development, no doubt, but for the proper use of which we must individually give an account at the Last day. Before proceeding to such a task as the consideration of the human mind, in its numerous and varied characteristics, without exercising the most profound thought, and deliberate contemplation, it would be perfectly futile. It is not only requisite, but indispensable, that we should compare our destined position and condition generally with the other animals. The use of a very limited portion of the mental faculties will unquestionably lead any individual to consider the unequalled development of his construction, stimulate him to fulfil the purposes for which he was designed, and fill his soul with rapture and enchantment, so as to obtain a glimpse at the attributes of Him, who alone can order the unruly will and affections of sinful man.

We cannot grasp infinity or reveal futurity, yet in the case of the human mind we cannot look upon it but as the noblest organized construction, and although not infinite in power, the greatest attribute of the Almighty; and though our present knowledge of its capabilities and peculiarities is in a comparatively advanced position, owing to practical illustration and gradual development, we have no hesitation in saying that the future will still more and more manifest mental power, and build, on the foundation at present laid down, the most stupendous fabric for contemplation and wonder for future generations.

The human mind is the brightest display of the power and skill of the Infinite Mind. It is created and placed in this world to be educated for a higher state of existence. Here its faculties begin to unfold, and those mighty energies, which are to bear it forward to unending ages, begin to discover themselves. The *object* of training such a mind should be to enable the soul to fulfil her duties well here, and to stand on high vantage-ground, when she leaves this cradle of her being, for an eternal existence beyond the grave.

Having now sufficiently introduced this "most wonderful construction," let us enter more into the detail, and endeavour to contemplate briefly some of its chief capabilities and peculiarities. In the extensive field of Nature, or rather in the condition of the earth, as fitted for the abode of man, the capabilities of the human mind fully develop themselves in the action of *means to end, or cause and effect*. If we look for a moment at the immense revolution which even the present generation has remarked in the gradual and prolific improvements which have taken place over the entire inhabited surface of the globe, what an instance of mental capability manifests itself! Why, there is not a year, a month, or even a day which does not more and more display its unequalled power, and almost inconceivable achievements. Mankind have been endowed with rational and intellectual

faculties to govern the entire creation, to improve and augment their social position and comfort, and as a medium to extol the beneficent Creator.

There is no circumstance, perhaps, which more than another shews the capabilities of the mind than the extensive category of ancient and modern inventions. Who could even enumerate them, much less shew their importance and varied characteristics? Who, living a hundred years ago, would have believed any individual if he had told him, that almost before another generation had passed away, the impetuous steam-engine would be rushing furiously over the length and breadth of the country, not only as a medium of traffic, but serving to humanize and evangelize the world, fraught with

"Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn."

Even the invention and application of steam-power sufficiently displays the power of the human mind; there is scarcely a department of industry, where before the work was achieved and prosecuted by manual labour, that is not now superseded by this inconceivably-important and useful invention. It would be here utterly impossible to enumerate even the chief inventions of the human mind, for not a day passes that either new discoveries are brought to light, or some decided improvements introduced in the old. Thus, in one instance do we see the wonderful power of the human mind, but even this, vast as it appears, does not furnish even a tithe of its capabilities; for, in its proper development, it bursts the bonds which before held it in abeyance, and rushes on furiously, accomplishing almost incredible feats of capacity.

Mental power has undoubtedly manifested itself more clearly and more wondrously in different circumstances and individuals. Let us, to illustrate this, take the pursuit of science. The improvement in this department of our intellectual resources has been very extensive indeed, but let us look more particularly into certain facts. The prosecution of the study of philosophy requires *reason*, and an endowment of high reflective faculties is indispensable. Acknowledging, then, that whether by special gifts of nature or superior cultivation and discipline, there are higher and lower orders of mind, we must, however, contemplate briefly the exalted character and wonderful achievement of certain classes of individuals, which manifests this highest order of faculties, and as we have already mentioned, by way of illustration, the action of these minds in the ranges of philosophy.

There are certain branches of Natural Philosophy, which not only admit, but demand certain conjectural imaginings, and none more so, perhaps, than Geology. This science treats on the manner the present appearance of the earth was produced by the operations of nature, and it embraces also a history of the changes that gradually and successively took place upon the surface of the globe, till it became fitted for the abode of man. It has likewise been defined as the science which describes the solid materials of the earth, the order in which they are arranged, and the organic remains which are found in them. Now, in the pursuit of this

sublime science the greatest ingenuity and profound reasoning is essential: such questions arise as to the state of the centre of the earth, whether it be Neptunian or Plutonic? the characteristics of certain fossil remains found imbedded in the earth—their probable age, form, food, habits, and development, and, in fact, we do not believe there is any modern science in the pursuit of which more profound reasoning is required. To illustrate the proficiency and capabilities of certain individuals, mentally, let us mention the wonderful accomplishments of Professor Owen, who is still living, and who actually from even the fossil tooth of some extinct species of animal can, although he has had no other evidence, construct the entire body, as has been often verified by subsequent discoveries! In fact, on one occasion, when he had obtained a fossil tooth, bearing characteristics which had been before unknown, he was derided, on constructing a most eccentric-looking animal, but it was not long till the entire animal was found in a fossil state, and completely corresponded to his curious model. In the consideration of the most conceivably abstruse points of science, accomplishments of almost as extraordinary nature as the above have been clearly explained, and, in fact, the capabilities of the human mind, as manifested in the pursuit of natural science, and in everything else, astounds not only those who, a few years ago, would have regarded modern discoveries as a fallacy, but even we ourselves, living in the midst of all this evincement of intellectual power, cannot but look on with the greatest admiration and enchanting amazement. Nature has gifted some individuals with certain talents, to a great extent, for some particular purpose, more than another, but when all this variety in its power is sufficiently manifested, and the accomplishments and improvements of each class of endowment are brought together, the whole forms another step in the enlightenment of our globe, universally, and more clearly reveals to us the omnipotent action and beneficence of an exalted First Cause. *Thought* and *memory* also evince in their possession the capabilities of the human mind. The one digests and produces ideas, and stimulates to their promulgation, while the other retains those ideas, and nourishes them for future action and development. The intense character of thought is strongly evinced in the many cases of mental abstraction, which we often see, from outward objects, and which often leads to egregious mistakes; and the retentive power of the mind, or *memory*, is fully displayed in numerous instances of fixing in the mind certain books, in a short period, or in vividly recollecting, after a considerable lapse of time, incidents of early life, or chronological events, etc. Thus are the unequalled capabilities of the human mind disclosed, and we are forcibly and unrestrainedly led to extol, in the highest degree, the wisdom and perfection of the Almighty, and to exclaim—

“We are fearfully and wonderfully made.”

In fact, the capabilities of the human mind are to us inconceivable, and although we are occasionally permitted to look through the telescope of the present into the domain and forebodings of the future, we can only perceive

and reflect upon the revealed circumstances and evidences we gradually see around us, and wait with patience for further analogous and more powerful demonstrations. There is no doubt but, in the present impetuous advance of general knowledge, we will be more fully reminded of Divine beneficence, and our own responsibility, in the further development of mental capabilities.

Having now briefly noticed the wonderful *powers* of the human mind, we will endeavour to point out a few of its general *peculiarities*.

There are two states—one normal and the other abnormal—in which the chief peculiarities of the human mind are fully displayed, viz., *sleep* and *drunkenness*. In commenting on these two conditions, before proceeding further, it may, perhaps, be necessary to state why ebriety should be adopted, when, during its influence, the mind is not in its healthy and ordinary condition. The reason why we have done so is this: the mind, when in its normal tone of action, is restrained, very often, if not always, by the sensorial power and the presence of reason from exhibiting its peculiar dispositions, tendencies, and peculiarities, as it otherwise would do, while under the influence of some stimulating or narcotic action. This will be evident with very little consideration, but it is more particularly to sleep, and the usual active state of the mind, that we intend to refer, although the other is obviously necessary, as it conduces to manifest these animal and other propensities which sane reason would annihilate and restrain.

The peculiarities of the human mind evinced in sleep are very numerous, and amongst these phenomena of sleep, in which these peculiar mental associations are characterised, we may mention, *dreaming*, *somnambulism*, and *nightmare*. The only conditions essential to ordinary dreaming are an almost always complete suspension of the judgment, and an active state of memory, imagination, etc. The phenomena of dreams have attracted the attention of mankind from the remotest periods to the present hour. Not so their mystic expounders. They have ceased to be patronised by princes, or to be lodged in palaces, and are now only to be found in hovels or discovered in cellars; while their patrons are the low and illiterate, the unfortunate and the weak, those who fail in enterprises they have undertaken, without due consideration, who pursue some impossible good of which they are solicitous, or who, neither having the patience to await the secession, nor the fortitude to surmount the evils of life, fly to adventitious sources for relief, as men in the agonies of submersion are seen to catch at the crest of the wave which engulfs them. It would be here impossible to even enumerate the various transitions which the mind undergoes, and the peculiarities it exhibits, when under the influence of dreaming; the mind is still at work, though reason is absent, and evinces the most wonderful phenomena, though, for the time, our rational propensities are suspended—and at the dawn of the renewal of our judgment leaves us bewildered and amazed.*

Somnambulism is a more exalted activity of the brain than simple

* For details on dreaming, somnambulism, etc., the reader is referred to the respective works of Drs. Macnish and Binns, on the "Anatomy of Sleep."

dreaming, and is that condition of the body in which some of the organs of the encephalon are unusually excited, while memory and consciousness are entirely suppressed. In somnambulism part of the mental faculties are awake, and part of them asleep, and the muscles, as well as some one or other of the senses, continue awake. Sleep-walking, therefore, approaches more nearly to the waking state than any other modification of slumber—nightmare excepted.

Macnish describes the condition of nightmare as follows: (1.) "An active state of the memory, imagination, etc. (2.) An impaired state of the respiratory functions. (3.) A torpor in the state of volition." The judgment is generally more or less awake; and in this respect nightmare differs from simple dreaming, where that faculty is suspended. It is one of the most distressing affections to which human nature is subject. Imagination cannot conceive the horrors it gives rise to, or language describe them in adequate terms. We have now given an outline of those three peculiarities of the human mind, but these again are subdivided: space will not allow us to detail the various actions which the mind undergoes and exhibits in those instances, yet the peculiarities displayed are innumerable as they are wonderful. Those three phenomena of sleep, to which we have referred, are usually produced by an over-excitement of the intellectual faculties, or some abnormal condition of the body. The influence of the mind on the body is very marked, and when either the mind is excited, from some occurrence which has riveted itself upon us, or the body is exposed to some external influence, or unhealthy condition, or both combined, the above characteristics of sleep are shown, and then, in the exhibition of those conditions, the peculiarities of the mind are divulged.

In now referring very briefly to the peculiar manifestations of the mind, displayed in ebriety, it is impossible not to be struck with the physical and moral degradation which it has spread over the world. It acts like the simoom of the desert, and scatters destruction and misery around its path. We will here only mention that in the state of drunkenness, an individual more strongly exhibits his natural disposition and propensities, owing to the partial suppression of reason, than he would do were the mind exercising its ordinary activity. There are scarcely two individuals among the entire number of the human family endowed with similar dispositions: thus, owing to the alarmingly extensive character and aspect which drunkenness has assumed, the peculiarities of the mind are more ostensibly apparent. These respective dispositions and curious natural endowments, as far as the mind is concerned, thus become, for the time, developed, and the observer, taking advantage of the circumstance, gives to the world some new mental peculiarity, and this extending for such a length of time, and displaying and consisting of such an extensive character, that our knowledge on this subject is every day more perfect.

We have now given a very rapid outline of these mental phenomena, which so exhibit themselves in our own organization. Of all the attributes of the Creator, of all the organizations He has constructed, the human mind is the most exalted. In fact, we are utterly unable to comprehend

its power, and can only through its medium acknowledge and admire the Omnipotence of its Author, and force and stimulate us to the fulfilment of our destination and our duty as creatures.

But to conclude, the capabilities and peculiarities of the human mind powerfully and wonderfully exhibit themselves around us; although not infinite in power, it is inconceivable to us, and as we are endowed with intellectual talents, so shall our responsibility be augmented. Our chief objects in life ought to be the cultivation and government of these gifts, so abundantly bestowed upon us by the prolific hand of Nature, to improve the social comfort and condition of ourselves and fellow-creature, and to glorify our all-merciful Creator. Let us then, in the cultivation of our minds, and in the course of our lives let the praise redound to Him who has made us the recipients of His grace and providing care.

Nothing in man is great, but in so far as it is connected with God. Let all, especially young men of the present generation, endeavour with their utmost might, to fulfil their destination. It is to them that our country must in future years turn, and entrust to them her honour, to uphold through good and ill; let us so develope and discipline our minds, that on all occasions of darkness, hesitation, or faint-heartedness, on the score of duty, our thoughts may recur to the consideration of what would redound to her credit and her honour, and our misgivings will vanish away. The cloud which obscured our mental vision will disappear, as the vapours of the night before the dawning of the day. And when in the far off future, all shall, like conquerors on the battle field, survey the scenes of our early struggle, strewn with the remains of rebellious desires, and with the prompting of pleasure strangled in their infancy, or baffled and beaten down in their strength, our hearts shall swell with a nobler, a truer, and a hollier pride than theirs; for our victory shall be gained, not over others, but over ourselves, at no cost of blood or tears to our suffering fellowmen, leaving no shattered victim of a wretched ambition to mourn whilst we rejoice; filling the chambers of the soul with no frightful record of deeds of blood, for we shall have proved no angel of death, swooping down upon a sorrowing world with the blackness of desolation in our train, nor marking our mournful track by the withering blight which should fall wherever we should spread the dark shadows of our wings—but ministers of light and life—spirits of charity warring with pain—messengers of mercy proclaiming a glad evangel of earthly hope to all within the sphere in which it has pleased Providence to place us; gathering after us our sole reward, the tear of grateful poverty—the tear which, more precious than refined gold, as our own poet so beautifully tells us, causes, when the costlier offerings of earth have failed, the gates of Paradise to swing backward on their hinges, and receive within their happy portals the spirit as it wings its heavenward flight from this frail tenement of clay.